

Hon. Danielle Larivee, Alberta Minister of Municipal Affairs

06 Jan. 2016

Hon. Cameron Westhead, MLA – Banff-Cochrane-Bow Valley

via fax to all parties

Cc: Hon. Kathleen Ganley - Alberta Minister of Justice

Cc: Mayor John Borrowman

Cc: Canmore RCMP

RE: Revisions to the Municipal Government Act

It should be considered to include legislation revisions that better protects fundamental public rights.

Issue: Town of Canmore - Charter Rights violations using Bylaws & Gestapo tactics

Over the past few years I and other residents who have peacefully protested the feral rabbit culls in the Town of Canmore have been subjected to various abuses, threats and general harassments.

Town of Canmore cites its land use bylaws, signage bylaws, and also denies access to public spaces (like the new recreation fitness centre) by calling on RCMP and bylaw officers to harass & intimidate.

We are told we cannot handout leaflets nor speak directly to people (RCMP officer Jeff Jantz), and we must pay \$100 and wait to get approval to put up temporary (no swear) protest signs (Canmore bylaw).

According to the Constitution Act, 1982 (aka the Charter of Rights) :

s.52 – the Charter of Rights is Supreme Law of Canada

15. (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

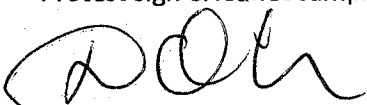
s. 2 - Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:

- (a) freedom of conscience and religion;
- (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication;
- (c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and
- (d) freedom of association.

s.12 Everyone has the right not to be subjected to any cruel and unusual treatment or punishment.

Those "police state" bylaws & actions interferes with our ability to raise public awareness of defects & withholding of facts & information by Officials of Canmore, as well as our views. Many people do not access the internet, even if they do, they still need to be informed of how & where to locate the online information, and to be free to distribute info, to associate, &/or attend public protests in Canmore.

Protest sign & leaflet samples at: www.canmorerabbits.ca facebook: Canmore Bunnies Rescue



Daniel Onischuk 9628-100A St Edmonton, AB T5K0V8 780-426-7676

each year, Canmore receives \$5 grants & subsidies from Alberta & Fed. Govt. HELP STOP CRUEL KILLINGS & IMMORAL USE of PUBLIC TAX MONEY !

Anti-Kill Protest Rally- www.CanmoreRabbits.ca

1pm-5pm @ Canmore Town Hall or Rec Centre 'Elevation Place'

Canmore : Aug.2-4, Oct.11/12, Dec.20/21 Calgary-Edmonton: Sept.1-3, Nov.11

Trap-Sterilize-Relocate gets rabbits out of town = same results without killing. Everyone Wins : everyone needs for removal & values for life are respected !

rescuers want to stop animal sufferings, deaths & conflicts. We think rabbits must be humanely rescued, sterilized then moved to sanctuaries &/or adopted. rabbits are wonderfully gentle, quiet and clean pets that naturally litterbox train which is why they are so popular as companion pets worldwide (USA top 5).

Rescuers want to stop more cruelty & could solve this faster at lower total cost.

Sept 2011-May 2014 Canmore spent about \$140,000 to trap & kill 500+ rabbits.

That was enough money to spay-neuter & sanctuary relocate 1000+ rabbits !!

Only kill contractors got tax-paid \$10,000 a month = about \$190 for each rabbit to simply put a cage down and check if a rabbit is inside. Anyone can do that !!

Yet Canmore still refuses to give any contract to rescuers to help rescuers pay costs of sterilization (\$130 each) & relocation/sanctuary (about \$50 each).

Why refuse rescuers contract bids to use trapping fees for Sterilize-Relocate ?

Why are rescuers denied equal opportunity to trap or any pay for trapping ?

Why should rescuers have to fundraise to rescue the rabbits & solve Canmore's problems while kill contractors get to use trapping money however they want ?

To try to justify a killing agenda, Town Officials said they did "extensive research"

but withheld crucial facts: at Univ. of Victoria (2010) volunteer rescuers

relocated over 1000 rabbits in about 10 months from about 200 acres of campus area (uvicrabbitrescue.com). Canmore also researched but failed to mention

Kelowna (2008), in about 9 months rescuers saved over 650 rabbits from all over the city (www.animalalliance.ca/campaigns/kelowna-rabbits.html).

Animal Rescue Corp. Dec 2011 estimated 2-3 months for Canmore, using dozens of volunteer rescuers (tourists for local economy) but ARC was unfairly refused.

Why are all rescuers refused? Trapping is not hard, any healthy adult or caring teenager can do (with proper training) — yet the kill contractors want still more money and admitted they will never finish (Rocky-Mtn Outlook — 20 Dec 2012).

Why not let rescuers to trap & be paid "per rabbit" -that kill contractors avoid?

With more people working to humanely solve this, the quicker this gets done.

Canmore does not have to kill to resolve the issues. Humane thinking, and by partnering with rescuers will give experience, many volunteers & cooperation of residents who want rabbits saved - recent chats still at 1/2 of local residents who are ignored as not part of the 'inner circle' of hunting buddies of Town Officials.

Canmore officials also misled public to push their kill agenda & kill contractor.

To create fear & panic about out of control breeding, and push their kill agenda, Canmore officials who said they did "extensive research" at Univ. of Victoria &

City of Kelowna, but again, withheld more vital info : in mild climates where

rabbits have plenty of food, about 90% die in the first year. U.Victoria research also says it takes five pairs to have 100 rabbits of which 90% die in first year — not "zero death" pushed by Town of Canmore that 1 female will have 72/year.

Read truth > <http://communications.uvic.ca/rabbits/facts.php>

Since Sept 2011, Canadian Humane Society is strongly against gassing rabbits.

Canmore Officials approved hideously cruel acid-gas chamber to kill rabbits

using a method banned in USA & Mexico ! more info: www.CanmoreRabbits.ca

Canmore: Officials inhumane policies are causing rabbits final 10-20 minutes

of life to be terror filled agony. We believe this is contrary to the true spirit and intent of the Animal Protection Act which is to prevent unnecessary suffering of animals & the many good people who support kind respect for life.

At town meetings, Officials blocked protests for humane, no-kill rescues.

Officials created anti-rabbit killing contract offers, favouring kill bids.

At the same time, Canmore bought a \$100,000 statue wasting money that could have helped rescuers or paid rescue costs for Animal Rescue Corp.

In 2013 Canmore ignored previously approved sanctuary Bear Valley Rescue to save 40 rabbits, instead cruelly killing though money & space was available.

Other good, local Alberta sanctuaries have been refused by Canmore officials, even ones that received rabbits in 2012. Closed door private decisions by

Canmore officials refuse good sanctuaries with out any good reasons.

Canmore Officials lied that there were no sanctuaries & no rescue space in town

- refusing to allow rescuers to use any buildings or temp. shelters in Canmore, Town public works yard or in Centennial Park or reuse the 2012 rescue areas.

2011-now Canmore still refuses to give rabbits to any good sanctuaries! US

Govt approved www.preciouslifefearimalsanctuary.org twice approved by BC Govt

for Uvic Rabbits (2010) & Richmond-Delta (2013). Animal Rescue Corp. offered to take rabbits in 2011 to adopt or place in USA sanctuaries but ARC was refused.

Winter of 2012, private donations paid to rescue 280 rabbits at no cost to

taxpayers. Unfortunately Town of Canmore appointed rescuer frustrated other rescuers then in summer 2012 returned to BC taking all \$28,000 of donations that would bought crucial sanctuary land in Alberta & further enabled rescues.

As parents, are we ok having our children grow up thinking it would be ok for them to torture or kill unwanted pets as "good" problem solving methods for the rest of their lives ? How will they value lives and treat people — as tools and resources to be uncaringly discarded or ignored when they are a problem too?

We need to be more a more compassionate, humane, responsible example for younger people to aspire to. This is about values of compassion, fairness & respecting life, whatever form it takes... would you want your pets or other animals to be cruelly & unnecessarily killed instead of life-saving alternative ?

Rescuers respect Canmore issues & want to get rabbits to safety ASAP.

That will also help to protect other animals made victims by Town kill mentality. Other wildlife, coyotes, cougars are routinely killed around Canmore, without ever posing an actual threat to people. Humane alternatives are ignored.

Predator coyotes & cougars are normally afraid of people unless fed by people repeatedly or challenged by dogs. Canmore has over 1800 registered dogs.

Dogs are known to infuriate bears & bears do not eat rabbits (a local news report of a bear chasing a rabbit was made up by a Town employee). Cougars also do not normally hunt rabbits which are too fast, agile & evasive, causing cougars to lose too much energy for a small meal. **Cougars main diet are much bigger, easier to catch large food animals : deer, elk, bighorns, moose that roam Town freely which are still a major predator attraction. Instead Canmore Officials wrongly blame only feral domestic rabbits (& wild rabbits) to justify cruel, unfair kill contract & shut out all humane rescue efforts.**

Canmore has 6 Councilors for 12,000 residents, Calgary & Edmonton each have 12 for 2 million people. Canmore has 40X more councilors per 1000 people!

Pay & benefits for just 3 extra councilors \$120,000 per year for part-time jobs. Just 1 year would pay rescue, spay-neuter & relocate ALL Canmore rabbits !!

Canmore does not have to kill to resolve the issues. Humane thinking, and by partnering with rescuers will give experience, many volunteers & cooperation of residents who want rabbits saved - recent chats is still 1/2 of local residents.

We need your support for a better win-win solution: rescue-sanctuary !!

Let us help rebuild a community of caring kindness for all living creatures, supported by intelligent, thoughtful, humane rescue funding & volunteers.

We still have a chance to do something kind & wonderful to be proud of !!

HELP US !! volunteer@CanmoreRabbits.ca

PLEASE Talk to friends, write letters of protest & make phone calls to help us !

People who want to protect animals have equal rights for their life-saving values to be treated fairly ! Supreme Law of Canada - Canadian Charter of Rights:

section 2 - freedom of religion, moral conscience, sec. 6.2b - right to work anywhere in Canada, and s.15.1 freedom from discrimination and fair, equal protection under the law - (see also Alberta & Canada Bills of Rights)

Alberta Human Rights Act: fair employment, fair pay without discrimination.

Yet Town of Canmore believes they should be above of all these public rights !

You can help us to turn the tide of kill prejudices & unfair discrimination !!

Court filed affidavit exhibits:
Canmore blocks sanctuaries - why ?

- > From: Sally Caudill
- > Sent: Tuesday, November 15, 2011 2:27 PM
- > To: 'ASHLEY ILLINGWORTH'
- > Cc: Ron Casey; Greg Burt; shurston@humanesociety.org; Ed Russell;
- > Gordie Miskow; Hans Helder; Jim Ridley; Joanna McCallum; John
- > Borrowman; jwpedersen@shaw.ca; Lisa de Soto; Lorrie O'Brien
- > Subject: RE: Proposal for feral rabbit plan

- > Dear Ms. Illingworth:

- > Attached please find a response to your proposal from the Canmore and
- > a copy of the Alberta Government Standards for Zoos in Alberta which
- > are referenced in the response.

- > Sincerely,
- > Sally Caudill, Ph.D.
- > Communication & Environmental Care Coordinator

- > From: ASHLEY ILLINGWORTH [<mailto:ashleyillingworth@shaw.ca>]
- > Sent: Sunday, November 13, 2011 6:59 PM

- > To: Contractor
- > Cc: Ron Casey; Sally Caudill; Greg Burt; shurston@humanesociety.org;
- > Ed Russell; Gordie Miskow; Hans Helder; Jim Ridley; Joanna McCallum;
- > John Borrowman;
- > jwpedersen@shaw.ca Subject: Proposal for feral rabbit plan

- > Attached in word format is a proposal for your review, the
- > Sustainable Resources and Development Department of the Alberta
- > Government has approved a facility to house all the Canmore rabbits. I
- > look forward to your response

- > Best Regards

- > Ashley Illingworth

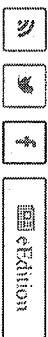
30/11/2011



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Canmore expects \$1 million surplus

Wednesday, Dec 09, 2015 04:13 pm By: Tanya Foubert

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The Town of Canmore is heading toward a \$1 million surplus in its operating budget for this year.

Senior finance officer Ric Irwin told council about the expected surplus during a financial update earlier this month.

The year to date variances put the municipality on track to have the surplus funds once the audited financial statements are completed in 2016.

Irwin detailed a variety of variances – both above and below expectations – but it was \$280,000 in salary, wages and benefits that was the big ticket item. There is direction from council to administration to find \$150,000 in savings in payroll this fiscal year.

"Once you factor in all the pluses and minuses, administration projects a year end operating surplus of approximately \$1 million and much of that is made up of non-tax sources such as fines and revenues," he said.

The recreation budget, and Elevation Place in particular, is exceeding expectations by over \$80,000 after the third quarter. Planning and development permit revenue is lower than expected by \$140,000.

Fines from photo radar and traffic enforcement are also doing well, with a trend of \$155,000 over budget while the contract cost for the RCMP saw a savings of \$160,000 after the 2014-15 reconciliation adjustments. The municipality also received \$80,000 from Workers Compensation for improving health and safety and a \$11,000 settlement from Alberta Health Services related to EMS contract costs.

Once audited financials are complete, council will decide how to use the surplus. In the past, such things as putting the money towards affordable housing reserves have been done.



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Canmore council questions feral rabbit removal

Wednesday, Nov 25, 2015 02:58 pm By: Tanya Foubert

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Canmore has been trapping and removing feral rabbits from the community since 2012.

CRAIG DOUCE RMO FILE PHOTO

Canmore council revisited the issue of the community's feral rabbit population during budget discussions, with ideas bounced around like getting more aggressive with removing the lagamorphs to reducing the annual amount

spent on them.

Since 2012, Canmore has spent \$60,000 a year on a contract to remove rabbits from the community, as they are not a natural species and are a wildlife attractant for various predators. That totals \$240,000 in four years to capture 756 rabbits; up until March this year.

Mayor John Borrowman said facing an unending annual cost for the management plan in place is a concern.

"Each year I have a harder time supporting this program," he said. "Our goal is no longer what it was when the program first started, which was to eliminate feral rabbits. Through experience we have learned that will not happen."

While administration was proposing a reduction of \$10,000 to the 2016 operating budget for the contract, Borrowman suggested it could go further during a budget committee meeting.

Chief Administrative Officer Lisa de Soto said administration considered cancelling the contract, but that did not seem prudent.

"If we do nothing, given the population out there, they will explode and we will be back in the situation we were in 10 years ago," de Soto said.

She said over the four years of the program progress has been made. The rabbit population is more stressed and vulnerable.

"As the program is successful and we see less rabbits, we can reduce this program over time."

Councillor Rob Seeley questioned at budget committee why Canmore is continuing to spend \$50,000 on it.

"Fifty thousand dollars a year is not responsible," Seeley said. "Maybe it is time to revisit it, talk to the contractor and take a look at (possibly) eliminating them all in one year."

Manager of communications Sally Caudill said it is not possible to predict what will happen with the feral rabbit population each year, as it is affected by weather patterns as well.

In fact, the Town of Canmore has no method of calculating the feral rabbit population and relies completely on anecdotal evidence that the numbers are going down.

But the numbers of feral rabbits caught is known. The numbers are tracked by the trapping season, which runs from October to March. In the first season, 189 rabbits were caught, in the second year, 317 were caught and in the third year, 171 were caught. Last season (October 2014 to March 2015) 79 rabbits were caught.

While the rabbits caught are counted in a season, it does not match with the budget year, which runs through the fiscal year January to December. That

makes it much more difficult to calculate the cost of the feral rabbit management plan per rabbit.

But over four years of the plan (2012-15) \$240,000 has been spent and 756 rabbits have been caught.

Council will vote on the operating and capital budgets in December at its last regular meeting before the holidays. Any changes to the feral rabbit management plan would have to be passed by motion.

As then Mayor Ron Casey remarked, you have it pretty good if the biggest issue you have to tackle is how to handle a rabbit problem.

The lagomorph problem began in the '80s, when a dozen or more domesticated rabbits were released in town. While there are a variety of origin legends as to Canmore's rabbits, the fact is they survived and did what only they can do – continue to breed.

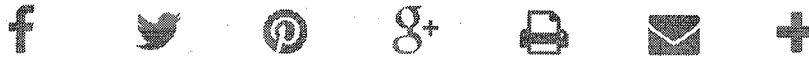
The very fact they came from a domesticated stock caused Alberta's Fish and Wildlife officials to deem it a municipal animal control issue, not a wildlife one.

The feral rabbit management plan was created and council approved hiring a contractor to trap and humanely euthanize the rabbits, which would then be provided to Alberta Birds of Prey Foundation in Lethbridge.

But the fact that the municipality was killing the furry four-legged creatures did not sit well with some and garnered attention from animal rights groups and made headlines nationally. The issue was so heated the RCMP were even brought in at one point to investigate threats being issued to Town staff over the plan.

At first, those who wanted to prevent the rabbits from being euthanized were able to have them spayed or neutered and homed in a sanctuary outside Calgary. The costs, however, were fully borne by those wanting to save the rabbits and after one season those efforts ceased and the municipal contractor carried on with the approved plan of using gas to euthanize them.

Another complexity to the management program is the fact that the contractor needs permission to trap rabbits on private property.



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Cc: Hon. Kathleen Ganley - Alberta Minister of Justice
Cc: Mayor John Borrowman
Cc: Canmore RCMP

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