

Faraday passes Exotic Animal Bylaw

By Mike Riley

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Faraday Township council passed its own Exotic Animal Bylaw at its meeting on May 5. Other townships across Hastings County like Limerick Township have been passing their own similar bylaws over the past few months to preclude the keeping of exotic animals within their municipal borders. These bylaws are based upon a template provided by Hastings County for this purpose. After a brief discussion, council passed bylaw 18-2021, the Exotic Animal Bylaw for Faraday Township.

Faraday Township had posted notice of intent on its website of the impending bylaw passage on April 15, pursuant to section 11, subsection 3 of the Municipal Act 2001. With the controversy that has arisen from the Drysdale family in Hastings Highlands having exotic animals and wanting to keep them on their property, municipalities in the area like Limerick Township have been passing their own Exotic Animal Bylaws. Some municipalities already do have such bylaws, like the town of Bancroft and Carlow Mayo Township.

These townships were able to work off of the Hastings County template, which allowed them to adopt their own bylaws in minimal time and regulate or prohibit keeping exotic animals within their borders. The exotic animals on the list in this template include big cats (lions, tigers, leopard, lynx, ocelot, serval), canidae (wolf, coyote, fox), non-human primates (lemurs, monkeys, apes), elephants, hippopotamus, camel, giraffe, zebra, tapir, rhinoceros, owls, hawks, eagles, harriers, osprey, common snapping turtles, crocodiles, alligators, caiman, reticulated python, ball python, boa constrictor, yellow anaconda and venomous snakes and lizards.

While the aforementioned animals would be banned, the template legislation provides a grandfather clause, which would allow those who owned these animals before the bylaw was passed to keep them. This grandfathered status is lost if the animal jeopardizes the health or safety of any individual, it is improperly or unsafely housed, enclosed or cared for, or if it attacks a person or animal.

At the council meeting on May 5, the township's pending Exotic Animal Bylaw was discussed by council in a public meeting. Faraday resident Chris Lambert had an issue with regarding the grandfather clause in the bylaw. She wasn't sure if there were any exotic animals in Faraday that would be grandfathered.

"I would imagine somebody has a snake in a fish tank in their basement or something but if they end up in the hospital or they die, what happens to the animal?" she asked.

Lambert suggested it could be something that council could deal with in the registration process. "I support this bylaw. I think it's a good idea and I'm glad to see you going ahead with it," she says. Switzer thanked her for her comments and asked if there were any other comments or discussion. Hearing none, council came out of the public meeting and went on to other business. Later on in the meeting, in a motion put forth by Deputy Mayor Marg Nicholson and seconded by Councillor Bill Green, council passed their Exotic Animal Bylaw.