

City of Meadow Lake
Bylaw Enforcement
2016 Year End Report

The City of Meadow now has a Bylaw Officer that has been in the position for about a year and a half. The Bylaw Officer has taken a varied approach to bylaw enforcement, not focusing on any one particular bylaw at a time but covering the City in a systematic fashion and stopping and speaking to people who are in contravention of the City's bylaws. This can be a time consuming process as within a few blocks the Bylaw Officer can see several different infractions. However, by dealing with those infractions and then moving on to another area of the City consistent enforcement can be achieved for most bylaws that the City of Meadow Lake has.

This year the Bylaw Officer has taken a proactive approach to enforcement, driving around and dealing with issued that are seen. This has resulted in just over half of the Bylaw Officers work being generated by him and the other half coming from public complaints about properties. The Bylaw Officer has worked hard to increase the presence of enforcement with the community and to deal with complaints in a timely manners letting the people that sent in the complaint know that it is being worked on and that they have valid concerns. The hope of this type of enforcement is to increase awareness of City bylaws and generate voluntary compliance with them. The expanding of the department in 2017 should still reflect this goal with the addition of a new officer and the transition of the current officer into the more expanded position of Community Safety Officer and Bylaw Manager.

In total this year the Bylaw Officer has worked on 398 cases. 118 of these cases involved dogs and the remaining 280 involved other City bylaws.

Non dog Related Cases by Bylaw

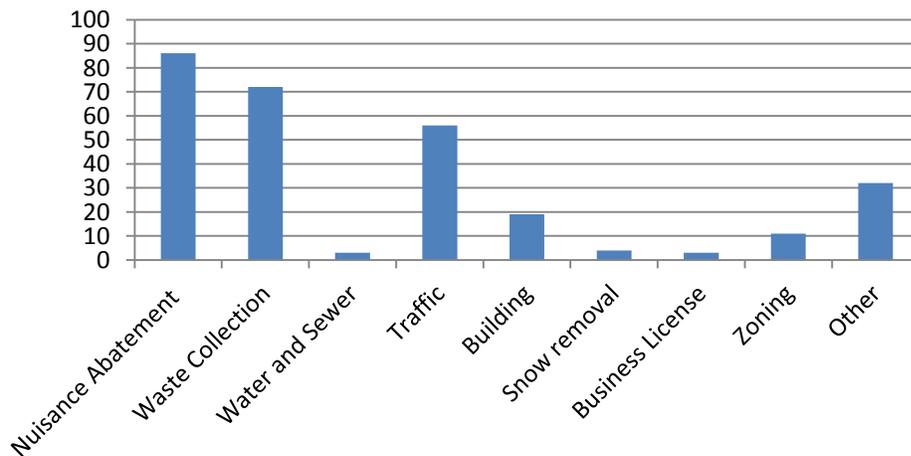


Figure 1.01: Number or non-dog related case files completed by the Bylaw Officer for the City of Meadow Lake in 2016

Dog related cases

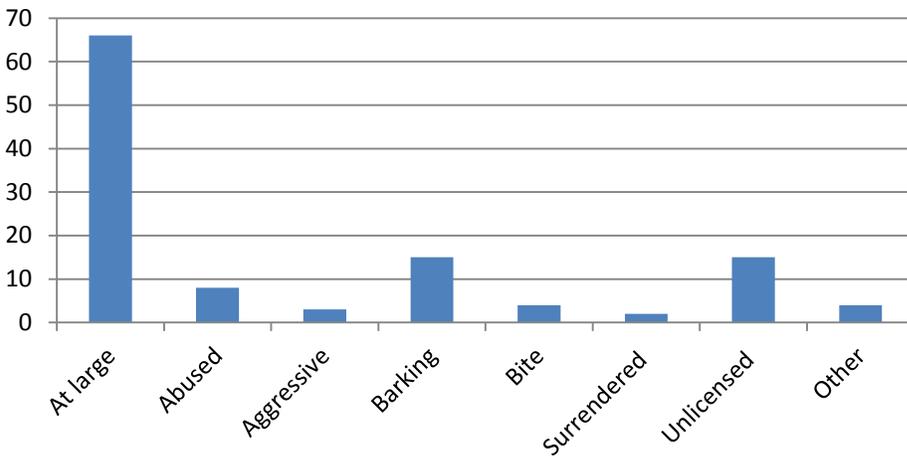


Figure 1.02 Dog related cases completed by the Bylaw Officer broken down by complaint type for 2016.

As seen in figures 1.01 and 1.02 the four biggest areas of enforcement within the City are nuisance abatement, waste collection, traffic, and dogs at large. These 4 areas took up the majority of the Bylaw Officer's time and will be further reviewed later on.

Warnings:

Most of the interactions that the Bylaw Officer has with the public start with a warning. This can be either written or verbal and is done with the hope of first educating the public what the issues are so that they are well understood, as well as creating an opportunity to generate voluntary compliance.

Warning tickets issued per month

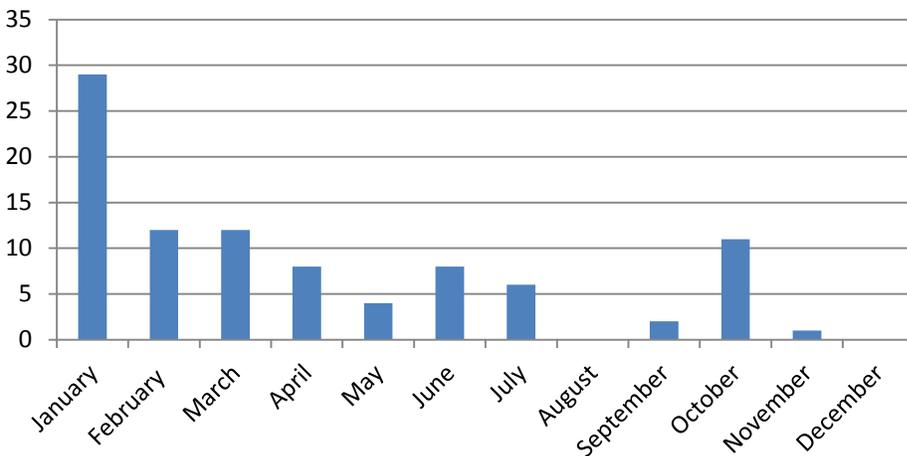


Figure 1.1: Written warnings issued to people within the City of Meadow Lake by month for 2016.

In total 93 written warnings were issued in 2016 this does not include the Waste Collection warning tags that were issued prior to the change in the Waste Collection Bylaw that allowed for the issuance of Notice of Violation tickets for waste collection offences. As seen in figure 1.1 warning tickets have been fairly consistent for most of the year with the exception being in January, August, September, November, and December.

The month of January is a grace period for many of the City’s bylaws. Giving written warnings to people about getting their dogs licensed or getting a current business license has been effective in getting people to comply with the bylaws and informing them of the consequences of choosing not to comply with the bylaws of the City of Meadow Lake.

The majority of the month of August was dealing with the backlog in cases that have not been completed during the summer. When dealing with ongoing cases giving warnings to the property owners or tenants is not effective. This is shown in the graph by no written warnings being given that month.

September, November, and December the Bylaw Officer was away on vacation, and away at training respectively. The Bylaw Officer was not on active duty the majority of these months and that is why numbers are much lower then what would normally be expected.

Notice of Violation tickets:

When Warnings do not work the Bylaw Officer can issue a ticket for a contravention of a bylaw where that bylaw allows for a ticket to be issued.

Violation tickets by Offence

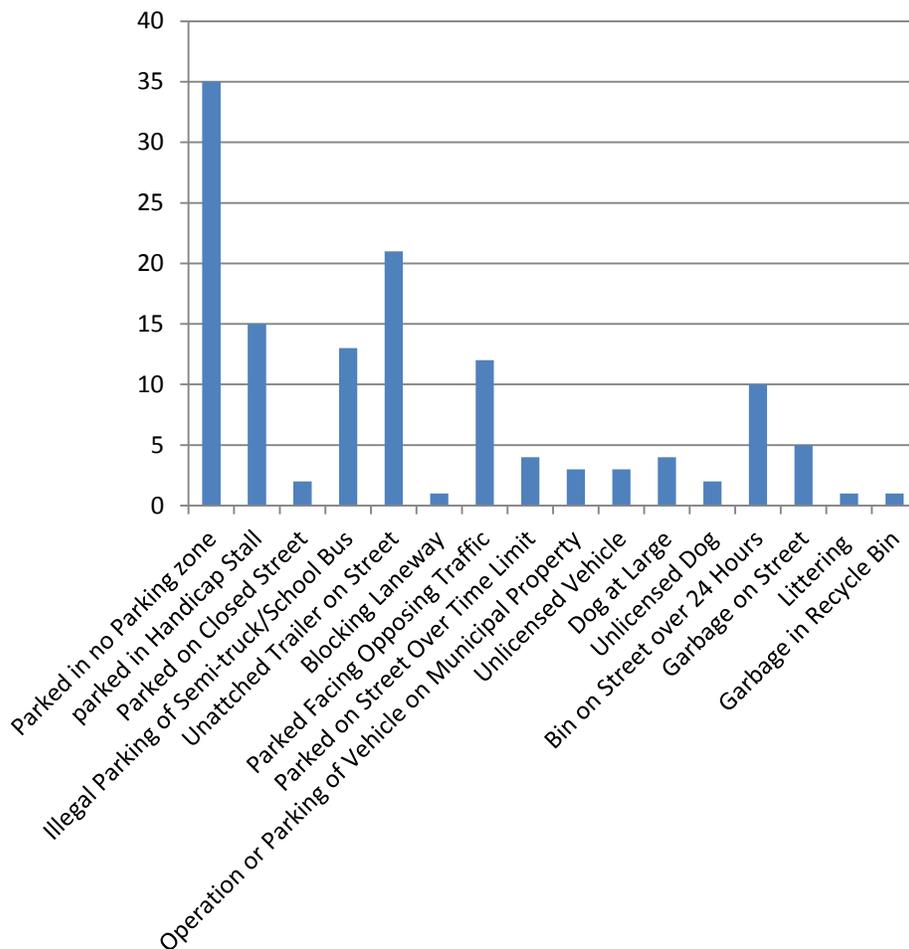


Figure 1.2: Notice of Violation tickets issued in 2016 by offence

As seen in figure 1.2 tickets are most often issued for traffic violations. This is due to the owners of the vehicles not usually being at the vehicle when the Bylaw Officer arrives, so a verbal warning is not an option.

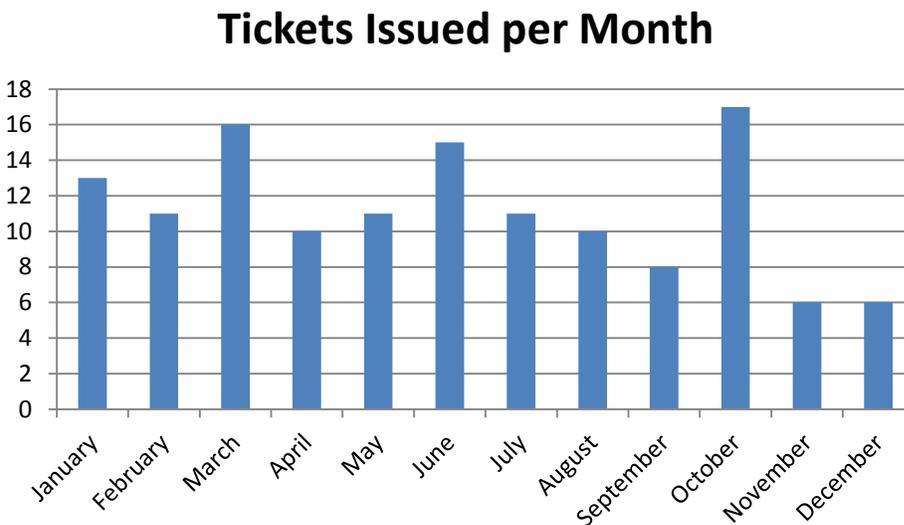


Figure 1.3: Notice of Violation tickets issued per month in 2016.

As seen in figure 1.3 ticket numbers are lower in the months of September, November, and December. This same trend was seen in figure 1.1 and that follows the times that the Bylaw Officer was not on active duty for large portions of those months. Ticket numbers are higher in March because of heavy snow fall events that caused Public Works to close streets for snow removal, causing more tickets to be issued for vehicles still parked on the closed streets. Many tickets were issued in the summer time for trailers being parked on the street unattached to a vehicle as seen in figure 1.2.

Orders to Remedy:

The second option that the Bylaw Officer has when warnings do not work is to issue an Order to Remedy. These orders are issued to compel a person to follow a particular bylaw. When Orders are issued the Officer informs the person being served that they have 15 days to comply with the order or appeal the order to City Hall. Failure to do one of these two things will result in the City doing whatever work is necessary to ensure compliance with the bylaws and the cost of any remedy is billed to the property owner.

As seen in figure 1.4 the summer months are the busiest for orders, as this is when the majority of the files under the Nuisance Abatement Bylaw are started. The spring and summer is also the best time of year to do cleanup as items are not frozen into the ground. The fall and winter are slower months as the snow tends to hide many of the issues that would otherwise be there. In figure 1.4 no orders were issued for the last three months of the year. No orders were issued in October due to a heavy snow fall that caused much damage within the City. Most residents worked to clean up their properties by the end of the month. October was also the month for the fall cleanup. This cleanup was postponed due to the snow storm. In November and December the Bylaw Officer was away for training in Prince Albert and as a result was not around to issue orders.

Orders to Remedy given per month

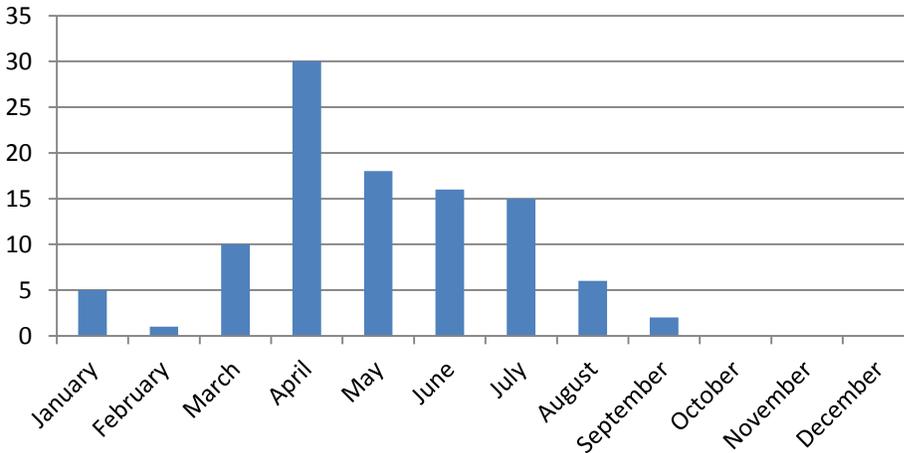


Figure 1.4 Number of Orders to Remedy issued by month in the year 2016.

Parking and Traffic:

Changes made this year to the traffic bylaw have helped to clarify provisions within the bylaw that were at issue, and prevented enforcement. One of these areas was the clarifying what a designated parking spot was. This allowed the Bylaw Officer to enforce the no parking in front lawns area of the traffic bylaw.

Traffic Warning Tickets

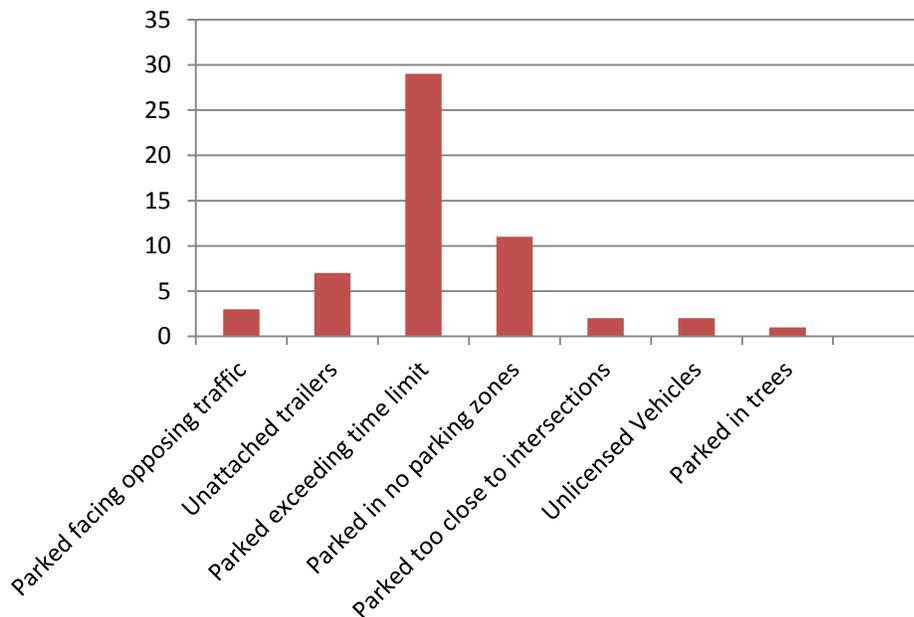


Figure 1.5 Traffic warning tickets issued to vehicles within the City of Meadow Lake in 2016 for specific offences.

As seen in Figure 1.5 the majority of the warning tickets were issued to vehicles that were parked on the street over a time limit, be that 2 hours for the downtown parking, 24 hours for residential parking or 72 hours for parking an RV. Figure 1.2 shows a better breakdown of the tickets issued for parking related offences.

Nuisance Abatement:

During 2016, 103 Orders to Remedy were issued. The majority of the orders were to clean up nuisance properties. Orders were also given to people that live on corner lots that needed to keep sight triangles clear under the zoning bylaw.

Orders given by Bylaw

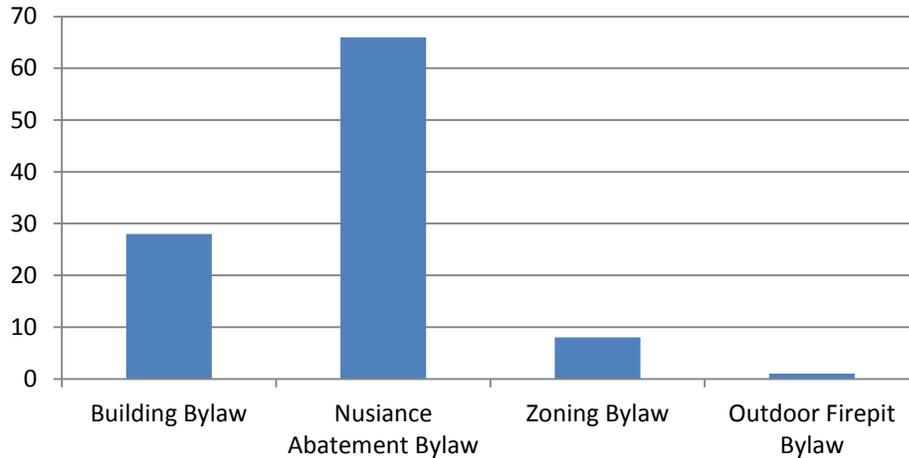


Figure 1.6: Orders to Remedy issued by the Bylaw Officer in the City of Meadow Lake for 2016.

Order Outcomes

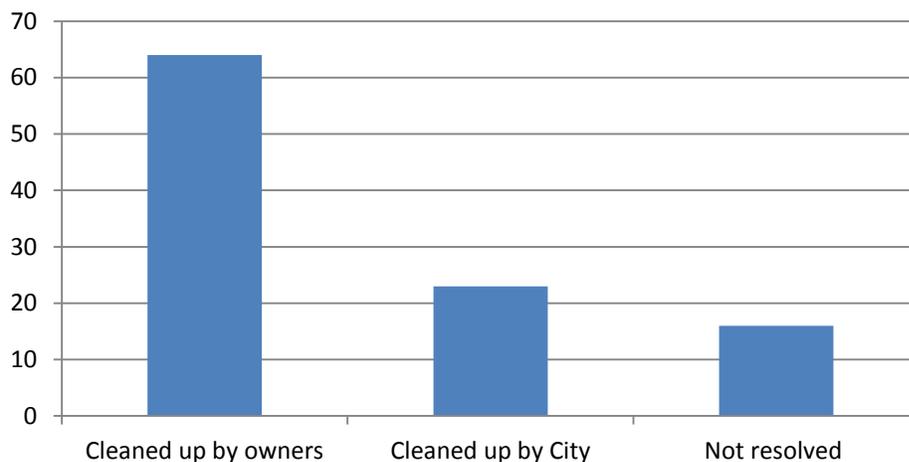


Figure 1.7: Order to Remedy outcomes for the City of Meadow Lake 2016.

As seen in figure 1.6 the majority of the orders issued were for nuisance abatement. The second highest numbers of orders were issued to people that did not have a temporary building permit for tarp garages. Most of the orders that were issued had the owners or tenants of the property comply with the order before any more work was needed on the part of the City as seen in figure 1.7.

Dogs:

2016 was a busy year for dogs with a large number of cases of dogs at large within the City as seen in Figure 1.02. Many of the dogs that were at large were returned to their owner and the owners licensed the dogs. Several dogs were taken to the Meadow Lake Humane Society. Most of these dogs were put up for adoption as the owners either refused to pay the fines to get the dog back or the owners were not known or had not come forward within the 72 hour holding period. As seen in figure 1.2 a few Notice of Violation tickets were issued for dog related offences. This practice was found to be in error under the bylaw so Summary Offence Tickets were issued once that was discovered. Many of the dogs taken to the Humane Society are also not issued formal tickets as fines are paid before the dog is released, this explains the high number of cases but the low number of tickets issued for these offences.

Waste Collection:

2016 saw several changes to the Waste Collection Bylaw. First in June the bylaw was changed to allow for more enforcement and to hopefully generate better compliance. In 2016, 123 warning tags were issued to bins left on the street over 24 hours.

Waste Collection Warning tickets

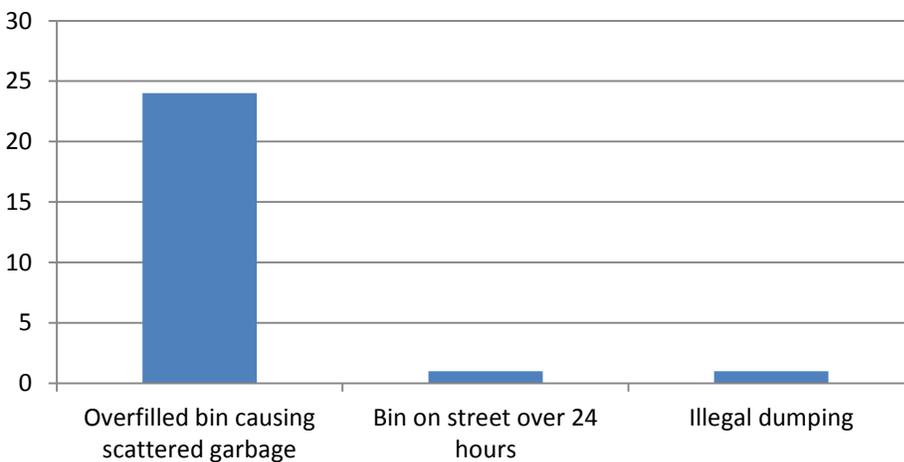


Figure 1.8: Warning tickets that were issued by the Bylaw Officer to bins under the Waste Collection Bylaw 12/2016 in 2016.

Since the beginning of the year 24 warning tickets were issued to bins that had garbage scattered on the street, as seen in figure 1.8. As seen in figure 1.2 the number of Notice of Violation tickets issued for both of these offences has been small in comparison to the number of warnings given.

Skunks:

2016 was an extremely busy year for skunks. The Bylaw Officer managed 3 traps throughout the summer months and maintained a waiting list for skunk traps. In total the City removed 25 skunks. 58 traps were set by the Bylaw Officer which resulted in 20 skunks being caught and removed from the City. 5 skunks that were found dead on the streets were removed by the Public Works crew.

2017

Looking forward into 2017 the bylaw department is looking to expand and hire another Officer. The department will also be branching out to do provincial statute enforcement with the current Bylaw Officer stepping into the role of Community Safety Officer. It is the hope of the department that with this expansion in personnel and services offered that the level of service offered to the public can be maintained if not improved upon. The Bylaw Department should ensure that focus is kept on educational activities, which generate compliance with City bylaws rather than focusing on the earning potential of the department.

Respectfully Submitted;

Joseph Hallahan
Community Safety Officer
City of Meadow Lake