

Monday, March 30, 2020.

To: Williston Selectboard Members

From: Sarah Mason, Town Clerk

Re: April 7th Agenda Item, Dog License Late Fee Waiver

Terry, Joy, Ted, Gordon, Jeff,

As mentioned in Rick's status report, I am requesting an extension on applying the late fee for dog licensing this year. The State due date is April 1 of any given year. The date itself cannot be changed, but we can control when to apply the late fee.

Dog licensing runs on a calendar year, not a fiscal year. People can register for the year we are in anytime between January and December. Currently, the registration fee is \$13. \$8 stays with the town, \$5 of each license goes to the State. Any late fee money stays with the town. (this charge is \$4).

After October, the fees are cut in half since the year is mostly over at that point. The fee becomes \$9, \$5 of which still goes to the state. (\$4 late fee, we're back to \$13).

Some other towns have opted for May 1st or May 31st as a date to start late fees. This may be too soon and we will find ourselves in the same predicament. Rick and I briefly discussed June 30th as a potential date. Even though this is not tied in with a fiscal year, it seems far enough out, has a good ring to it, and will give people some kind of deadline to stick to.

That being said, I am also amenable to no late fee at all this year. Many towns on the Clerk Listserve are forgiving the fee entirely. The number of people that will come in between July 1 and October 1 will be minimal, and chances are it will be someone with a brand-new dog who wouldn't be charged the late fee anyway. The \$4 late fee on a half price license of \$9 would get us back to the on-time fee of \$13 anyway.

I'm afraid this is not going to be a banner year for dog registration either way. Normally at this time, we are near the usual/predictable/faithful 500 people. As of today, I'm at about 260. By the fall, we normally top out somewhere around 650. I think it is taking more of a backseat than on a normal year. Quite a large number of our loyal dog registrants are seniors, and at this time, \$13 is pretty substantial and could be put toward meals or other life necessities.

Sorry for the long-winded memo, but I wanted to give some background about what kind of money we are talking about.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Mason