

CMA 2025 #17
IN CITY COUNCIL
January 27, 2025

To the Honorable, the City Council:

The Cambridge Animal Commission, along with the Budget Office, have determined that the City of Cambridge has been charging less than neighboring municipalities for dog license fees. The Cambridge Municipal Code, Section 6.04.020, provides that the dog license fee for spayed or neutered dogs is \$10.00, and for unspayed or unneutered dogs the fee is \$30.00. The following are the fees charged in municipalities in our vicinity:

City or Town	Spayed or Neutered	Not Spayed or Not Neutered
Cambridge	\$10.00	\$30.00
Somerville	\$20.00	\$30.00
Watertown	\$10.00	\$35.00
Boston	\$15.00	\$30.00
Brookline	\$20.00	\$20.00
Newton	\$20.00	\$25.00

The Cambridge Animal Commission proposes changing the dog license fee for spayed or neutered dogs to \$20.00, while leaving the charge for unspayed or unneutered dogs at \$30.00, to bring the City's fees more in line with other communities. Pursuant to G.L. c. 140, § 139, the City Council must approve of any increase to the city's dog license fees by majority vote. I have attached a proposed ordinance amendment hereto, and am requesting that the City Council refer this matter to the Ordinance Committee or to pass the proposed ordinance amendment to a second reading.

Yi-An Huang
City Manager



6.04.020 Dogs—License required—Fee.

Every dog six months old or over shall be licensed pursuant to G.L. c. 140, § 137. As proof that the dog has been spayed or neutered, the owner or keeper shall present to the Director of the Animal Commission ("Director") or his or her designee a certificate of the registered veterinarian who performed the operation. Effective ~~June 1, 2015~~February , 2025, the fee for such license shall, except as otherwise provided, be ~~twenty~~ dollars for a spayed or neutered dog and thirty dollars for a dog that is not spayed or neutered. If the Director or his or her designee is satisfied that the certificate of the veterinarian who performed the operation cannot be obtained, he or she may accept in lieu thereof a sworn statement of a veterinarian registered and practicing in the Commonwealth, describing the dog, and stating that he or she has examined the dog and that, in his or her opinion, it has been spayed or neutered. Pursuant to G.L. c. 140, § 139, no fee shall be charged for a license issued under this section for a service animal as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act or regulations promulgated thereunder or for dog owners aged 70 years or older. No part of the fee shall be refunded because of the subsequent death, loss, spaying, castration, removal from the Commonwealth or other disposal of the dog. Nor shall any part of the fee paid by mistake be refunded.