

# Animal care debated at public meeting

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Demands to reform animal care services in the North Okanagan appear to be gathering some momentum.

About 60 people attended a public meeting Wednesday to discuss the current provision of services that assist stray or abandoned animals.

"It's unproductive to have different organizations working in different parts of the town," said Pat Peebles, one of the meeting organizers.

Currently, the B.C. SPCA looks after animal cruelty issues while the Vernon Animal Care Society looks after unwanted cats and K9 provides dog control under contract for the North Okanagan Regional District.

Those attending the meeting are calling on NORD to end an agreement the SPCA has to lease a publicly owned shelter on Haney Road and for the regional district to run animal care services itself.

NORD is also being asked to take over dog control using its own staff.

Peebles said the next step is for her group to seek expert help.

"We need a lawyer to help look at the lease," she said.

A businessperson is also being sought to get involved.

"If we can create a business proposal (for a regional district shelter), we can take it to NORD," she said.

Peebles wasn't disappointed with Wednesday's turnout.

"Sixty people can easily become 200 or 300 people," she said.