

Town Council, January 14, 2025

The Council of the Town of Carberry met on Tuesday, January 14, 2025, in the council chambers with Mayor Muirhead in the chair, and Councilors Kalinowich and Rea present. Also present were CAO Stephenson and Youth Councilor Boganes. Regrets from Councilor Sudak.

Finance and Accounts:

The report from ACAO McConnell was accepted, and the Financial Statements for December 2024. Accounts including cheques, electronic payments, and direct withdrawals totaling \$359,681.84 were approved for payment.

By-laws:

By-law 02/2025, which establishes a reserve for End of Employment expenses, was given its first and second readings.

Unfinished Business:

The policing levels in the Blue Hills Detachment of the RCMP have been a cause of concern that was raised at the AMM convention. As a result, a meeting was promptly held in Forrest earlier that day with the affected municipalities all present along with staff officers from D Division. The officers were attentive and appreciated the unhurried exchange of suggestions and concerns. Foremost concern was the lack of visible police presence in the expanded detachment. The most promising cure would be to establish Community Safety Officers in the participating communities. The cost of the first year of a CSO, which would include purchasing the necessary equipment, car, and office space, could be about \$150,000. Enough interest was expressed that this might be shared among several municipalities. The topic will be brought up at the impending meeting of the Western Caucus, where municipalities who have used CSOs will be brought in to discuss their experiences. The advantages of CSOs would be increased police visibility, enforcement of local by-laws, a revenue stream from tickets issued, and increased safety. The RCMP are in favour of the idea and would be able to call on CSOs to help them with their work in extreme circumstances. A concern the mayor brought up was communication. As a spokesperson for local government, he is often asked about ongoing police investigations or initiatives. He would like to be able to get appropriate and accurate

information to reassure his constituents. A contact officer who could be called at need would be an asset.

Council adopted a Tendering and Procurement policy, [GG-01-2025]

The Westman Mental Wellness and Suicide Prevention Association have asked for office space in which to do counseling as needed. It is expected that this will be a day or two per month. The CAO suggested that the basement of the Town Office might be suitable and made available at no cost. Council agreed that the non-profit organization was doing valuable work and was deserving of support. They approved the arrangement.

The by-election to fill the position vacated by John Anderson will be held on March 18. Forms have already been given out and will be available at the Town Office. Nominations will be accepted between February 4 and 10. Voting will take place at the Drop-In Centre on March 18. Advance polls will be held on March 8. A nomination must be accompanied by at least 20 signatures, and the SEO suggests providing extras so that if a signature is considered invalid it won't invalidate the nomination.

General Business:

Council approved a list of memberships that the Town will take out for 2025. They also established a Board of Revision as required by the Municipal Assessment Act.

To cover the \$500,000 line of credit needed until the year's taxes are received, Council pledged the taxes to be received as security to the Credit Union.

In another annual requirement, Council set the designated year for properties in arrears as 2024 and set the Tax Sale date as October 7, 2025 at 10:00 am.

The house opposite the hospital which the Town bought to accommodate visiting medical staff has been in steady use. To cover the expenses of cleaning and maintenance on the building, it will be necessary to charge a fee. The usual residents are visiting agency nurses, whose accommodations are paid by the agency. The CAO was asked to devise a form for them to fill out when they use the house. The cost will be \$60/night. An arrangement will also be made to accommodate staff members who may wish to stay over in town.

As required, Council passed a motion expressing their intention to participate in the Canoe Procurement Group of Canada during the calendar year of 2025.

Council agreed to purchase a late model SUV as a Town vehicle, as suggested in the last council meeting.

Reports:

Youth Councilor Boganes reported that the grade twelves have just completed provincial English exams and will shortly be taking provincial exams in Mathematics. The high school will take their mid-term exams on January 27-30, and the new term will start in February. The Westman Honour Band, with several Carberry members, will play on February 7-8. The Student Experience Panel will make a presentation to the Board of Trustees and the division administration at Elkhorn on January 16. The CAO has received word that the mayor of Portage la Prairie is gathering all Youth Councilors together for a sharing of experiences and a visit to the Legislature to talk with cabinet members and watch the Legislature in action. Boganes was pleased to get the invitation.

The CAO has spent the time since joining the MMA board juggling many commitments but will be more available at the office once he returns from his holiday on January 27. His performance review is before the council. After an RFP, he received a lot of interest in providing a facilitator for the strategic plan update. He has been working with managers to establish a training plan and budget to give staff the opportunity to upgrade their skills. Public Works is sourcing training to provide core CEUs [Continuing Education Units] to enable more staff to be certified for wastewater.

From Danica Fitzsimmons, a mental health professional, he has learned of a program that allows funding for 'social prescriptions' — for example a nurse practitioner or physician might prescribe a fitness class, park pass or gym membership and there would be funding for it. He asked her to prepare a presentation for Council and/or the CACF.

He attended a Finance and Administration Boot Camp – a great course with knowledgeable instructors. It offered an opportunity to bounce ideas off others, discuss challenges and successes, and learn best practises from veteran CAOs. He gave credit to staff for much hard work over the year end.

The EDO has found a third landowner to host a sign on the westbound lanes of Hwy 1. The three applications may now be submitted to Highways

for approval, at \$500 per sign. With approval the signs, revised as per Council's suggestions, may be ordered.

The CP Christmas train came through, and about 450 people came out to watch; 350 hot chocolates were served before running out. A successful event! Thanks to all who helped. She has completed all levels of the Community Edge course and needs only to complete five case studies to graduate in June. She is preparing for the RMWF; the table cost is better than expected, and she is gathering merchandise and freebies. She is applying for grants for the highway signage and planning for a place to site the gun and cenotaph when details are available from the Legion.

She is in negotiations with Golden West Broadcasting for radio and online advertising. If they provide a quote, she will assess it with CAO and Council.

The 'Christmas in Carberry' promotion was a great success as was the Parade of Lights. She suggests purchasing a small trailer for use as a parade float in both major parades. The council and the CAO agreed and will keep an eye out for a 6x12 trailer. The AGM and Awards Banquet was attended by 55 people, and the new executive has been selected.

PMH has replied to the request to be included in U of M's Rural Medical Week. The ED hopes to use the house to accommodate the students, and the HAC will help with the welcome and activities.

The New Daycare Committee has linked up with Cooperatives First to specify and get out an RFP to quantify the size of the grant to apply for. The province will provide 60% of the cost if applied for before March 2026, but the committee hopes to be built and open before that.

Main Street is now fully rented out for the New Year.

Public Works reports that since November they have been kept busy with snow control along with all their other duties. They had work winterizing the lagoon infrastructure and assisting the movie crew. Staff have taken first aid and confined space training. They are also looking for CEU credits towards wastewater operator qualifications. The new sander works well. The rubber-tired backhoe will need new tires soon, at over \$3,000. They will repair the 'reactor' blade and would like some welding accessories and a compressor for the lift station.

The Arts Council will be meeting to do some strategic planning.

At the Museum, it is hoped to insulate the loft with spray foam along the west and north walls.

The people from the Neepawa clinic are planning a return visit to further develop ways of sharing facilities and staff. The mayor has been asked for an update from Dr. Tannasse, who is very keen to come to Carberry. Since it is PMH's decision, it would be fitting that they spoke to him and not leave him asking us here. There certainly should be some way through the paperwork and qualification barriers to enable someone keen to come here and work when such help is so badly needed. Doctors Manitoba is also eager to get more physicians here. A meeting with PMH is scheduled for February 12.

The Planning District is back to recruiting to replace Andrews after refusals from the applicants they chose after the last interviews

The New Daycare Committee's latest meeting was very positive; they are working with Cooperatives First to set proper specifications, and they have received word of a \$10,000 donation which will be of great help with their work.

Communications:

AMM advised that they will be holding their spring convention in Brandon, and the Fall convention in Winnipeg.

Manitoba sent a multi-year infrastructure investment strategy which gives details of projects to which they have committed. Included in the list are intersection improvements on the Trans-Canada at PTH 5.

AMM sent a letter endorsing the concerns of the municipalities in the Blue Hills Detachment and outlining their provincial and national lobbying efforts to alleviate the shortage of manpower in the RCMP which in Manitoba amounts to a nearly 30% vacancy rate.

MMSM, who oversee the province's efforts at recycling, advise that Carberry will receive \$55,431.46 which represents 126 tonnes of recycled material at \$459.11 per tonne.

BMO advises that their Carberry branch will close at 5:00 p.m. on July 25, 2025, and all accounts will be transferred to their branch on Rosser Avenue in Brandon. Council was upset by the nature and timing of this announcement and will immediately start finding out if this decision can be

reversed. Contact will be made with the Vice President who signed the letter, and with the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada.

Around the Table:

Mayor Muirhead offered his congratulations to CAO Stephenson who was awarded the Community Member of the Year award at the recent awards banquet of the Chamber of Commerce.

Councilor Rea commented on how successful and impressive the Parade of Lights had been and offered her congratulations and best wishes to the new businesses on Main Street.

Councilor Kalinowich also congratulated the organizers of the Parade, and of the welcome to the CPKC Holiday Train. He added that the town's streets have been well maintained throughout the snowfalls. He added his congratulations to the CAO.

Reporter McNeily wished all an excellent New Year and reminded them that it was now time for the next Newsletter, and to get their submissions in promptly.

With that, Council went *in camera* to discuss personnel matters, adjourning at 9:55 pm.