

## Town Council, 25-02-11

Carberry's Town Council met in their council chambers on Tuesday, February 11, 2025, with Mayor Muirhead in the chair and Councilors Sudak and Rea in attendance. Regrets from Councilor Kalinowich. Also present were CAO Stephenson and Youth Councilor Boganes.

### **Delegations:**

There were two delegations to the meeting, of which the first was Laurie MacNevin, to give what she hopes will become an annual report on the programs at the Library. She began by introducing herself as a local resident for the past ten years, with three children of whom two are in Carberry schools, and a husband in the RCMP who is based in Brandon. She has a master's degree in English and History and is working on a further master's degree in library science. She has been librarian here in Carberry for the past five years.

It is Laurie's conviction that however important books may be, there is a lot more for a library to do than house and circulate them. A library should promote *literacy*, which can be interpreted in many ways; it can be applied to things like technological literacy, social literacy and community literacy. As a result, besides books, the library provides games, puzzles, technological items such as tablets, a printer, and even a 3D printer. She also organizes events, games and clubs that bring people together across age lines and social ones. She wants to create a place where people can go to reliably get answers and directions. Accessibility is an important element in her choices. She has a growing collection of large print books, she has collections of iPads and tablets, graphic novels, puzzles; a library card can further access large collections of eBooks, videos and audiobooks(free). Besides curating the resources, she feels it important to teach how these things can be used. One of the things she enjoys about a library is that you don't need a reason to come, it is a hub where many different activities may start or be joined. She works with other related agencies in town such as the Arts Council, Seniors, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Rec department. She presented statistics for the 2024 calendar year that showed over eleven thousand visits, twelve thousand check-outs, two thousand technological interactions, and just under a thousand active library cards. It was an extensive and impressive report, supported with a skillful PowerPoint

presentation. Council was impressed and thanked her for her work. She will be encouraged to make this an annual event once her 2025 statistics are available.

The second delegation was from Lisa Adriaansen, who has for some time now been the lead caretaker of the Day Lily Garden at the north end of the town with other volunteers. She and Donna Chandler and two ladies from Acadia Colony have provided whatever care the garden needs beyond the mowing of the grass and hedge trimming that the Parks and Rec Department provides. Her concern was to map a course forward to ensure that the garden receives the care it needs and deserves. She was asked whether she would continue to be a resource and a volunteer, and agreed to be involved to some extent, but was looking to get some support from the Town or the Parks and Rec. It was explained that though the Day Lily Garden is indeed a park, it is strictly owned by the Town, so the joint employees are less likely to be available. The Town does have Green Team employees who might be assigned, though. Because garden work is strenuous but requires knowledge, it is hard to choose a suitable person. A suggestion has often been made that a Community Gardener post be created, but it would be difficult to fill for the same reasons, especially as it is a limited term seasonal position. The possibility will come up again as the budget for the year is discussed. It was hoped that Adriaansen would be available to suggest tasks to whomever was assigned to the work. She was asked how much time she thought would be helpful. It wouldn't need to be a five-day per week job, but the sort of bare minimum she had in mind would be a half day every other week. She was assured that "we'll figure out a way" — the garden is an asset to the town and very conspicuous. Adriaansen was thankful that the twice yearly 'bee' that brings a large group in from Acadia Colony to weed and tend the beds is being funded by the Town. She noted that the newly established memorial area has to be regularly watered; perhaps at the same time some parts of the larger garden could be watered too. She was thanked for her concern and her ongoing maintenance of the Day Lily Garden and assured that the Council was eager to see it kept up and improved.

### **Finance and Accounts:**

Council accepted the ACAO's report as presented and received the Financial Statement for January 2025. Accounts, electronic payments and direct withdrawals totaling \$414,207.57 were approved for payment.

## **Planning:**

Council approved the subdivision application for Carberry Lyons Estate Ltd. to divide the lot on which Carberry Lyons Estate is located into three lots; one for the Lyons Estate itself, one for the building presently occupied by OTTER, and a strip along the Wellwood Road to be zoned for commercial development.

Council also approved a subdivision application for Todd and Darcy Witherspoon to subdivide a duplex on Wheatland Drive into two separate lots, on condition that variance orders be obtained to reduce the required site widths appropriately to comply with the Zoning By-law.

## **By-laws:**

By-law 02/2025, which establishes a reserve for End of Employment Expenses, was given its third reading, and passed into law.

By-law 04/2025, which sets Mobile Home Park Fees, was read for a first time.

By-law 05/2025, which regulates the proceedings and conduct of Council was read for a first time.

## **Unfinished Business:**

As a matter of ongoing concern, Council was advised that negotiations over the upgrades to the intersection of Highways 1 & 5 are continuing.

The closing date for nominations for the by-election for Councilor has been reached, and two candidates have been accepted: Samantha VanDamme and Lisa Dobbin-Waters. The election will be held on March 18 in the Drop-In Centre, with an advance poll on March 8 in the same place.

The sudden announcement that BMO is withdrawing its branch from Carberry and sending their clientele to a branch on Rosser Ave. in Brandon has drawn some interesting results. Karla Robertson Wiebe of the CIBC has expressed an interest in taking up the slack and has met with the mayor, EDO and the CAO. She would like to hold a 'meet and greet' in March to find out what local residents feel about a possible change. She is not considering a new branch, but perhaps an office and an ATM. Since she is on a 'work from home' routine she could be working from the office in town and be present to answer questions and so on. The EDO is also now canvassing other banks to see if there are any other interested institutions.

BMO plans a 'meet and greet' on March 5 to present their ideas to local clients, and that would also be an appropriate date for CIBC's event.

### **General Business:**

A couple of policies were adopted. The Drop-in Centre's terms of reference have been drawn up and were adopted by resolution. The Town of Carberry Private Works Policy, which governs work performed by Town employees for private entities and references the recently passed Fees and Charges By-law (# 09/2024) was adopted.

The proper procedure for asset retirement can be costly, but if not followed leads to a qualification of the auditors' opinion. Council agreed that it was good form to follow the auditors' rules and encouraged the CAO to accept the proper asset retirement obligations.

### **Reports:**

Youth Councilor Boganes reported that the Honor Band had played in Brandon the previous Friday and Saturday, and that the Jazz Band would be playing in Winnipeg on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The grades 5 & 6 have held a bonspiel and would be going tobogganing on the upcoming Friday. The present week has been a "spirit week" with a number of special events, culminating with Valentine's Day on Friday. In sport, Basketball playoffs are upcoming, and preparation is in hand for a boys' soccer team to be entered in competition in the fall. Carberry Collegiate has been selected as a site for PISA [Programme for International Student Assessment] testing; students born in 2009 will be tested for their comprehension of Reading, Mathematics and Science in a program that compares their aptitudes across 77 countries. The provincial government has announced a 3.4% increase in education funding. It remains to be seen how this will affect taxes in the Beautiful Plains School Division. The mayor of Portage la Prairie is hoping to gather all Youth Councilors that have been appointed in Manitoba for some networking and sharing, along with a trip to the Legislature to meet MLAs and cabinet ministers and discuss the Youth Councilor program. Councilor Sudak discussed offering Boganes transportation to the event.

The CAO's own report included that there had been a total of 22 responses to his RFP for a facilitator for the Town's next Strategic Plan. The choice will be difficult, and councilors will be asked to give their opinions. The costs are for the most part similar, in the range of \$15,000 to \$18,000,

which is a little over the predictions, but not by much. The cost will have to be considered during the budget deliberations.

Stephenson also reported that he has been in contact with Danica Fitzsimmons about the idea of “social prescriptions” to address mental and physical health concerns. This would allow selected individuals and practitioners to prescribe such things as a gym membership, or a park pass, art class, etc. and the cost would be covered. The means and amount of the required support is to be discussed. The local Community Wellness Day is approaching; April 24 is the date selected. It will again be held in cooperation with the collegiate. The date coincides with the student-led conferences, which means a greater number of people may possibly attend, and the following day is open for the students. A large range of resources will be offered. Cat Arnold will speak, and the evening’s wrap-up will be “Big Daddy” Tazz. An overnight stay will be offered the students as a connection-building event with no phones — the emphasis will be on interpersonal communication.

The EDO reports that the paperwork for the highway billboards is complete and awaiting signatures from the landowners. She will apply for a grant to cover the cost. The problem with the lights along the west side of Main Street may be related to a failure of one of the lampposts. Hydro has been asked to investigate. She continues to negotiate with Golden West Broadcasting, and they will report in person to the March meeting. She is meeting with Neepawa’s EDO to broaden cooperation. She is now chair of the SWRRT, who are discussing networking, housing, and immigration. She has sourced a couple of trailers for a parade float. Council considered the smaller as better to be hauled by the new Town SUV. For the winter fair she has sourced a variety of ‘swag’ and will have some of the merchandise for sale to see what moves. The price of the booth and its services was better than expected. Her commitment to the RMWF display overlaps her long-arranged holiday trip, and the mayor and Councilor Rea agreed to attend and do the wrap-up.

Public Works spent much of January on snow removal and have started to clear the drainage ditches in preparation for the spring thaw. There are some vehicles around town that have sat on the road for months making snow removal difficult. Public Works have made a number of small

purchases and warn that the town will have to budget for new rear tires for the backhoe and for one of the trucks.

The Fire Department received a generous donation for a drone with thermal imaging which will be helpful both in searching for hot spots and for finding lost people outdoors. They have purchased a new compressor for filling their breathing apparatus. They received a donation from some people who were rescued when lost in the woods and discovered with the help of Austin's drone.

The Museum board's AGM is coming up shortly, which will allow council and the public to hear about their year.

The Health Action Committee has been discussing with Neepawa's committee ways in which they can improve their organizational structures. They are looking for ways to add equipment to the local clinic and health centre with advice from the region. As a staff recognition effort, they are providing tea and the fixings for the staff as the Health Region and Shared Health have stopped providing them. The Town has purchased coffee as well. They are promoting the use of "patient passports" to help health professionals with background information on one's condition and medications. They are working with a balance of about \$68 thousand, of which \$21 thousand is earmarked for the courtyard improvements. They are concerned that Manitoba Health's promise to reduce the use of agency nurses will leave some facilities understaffed or even unstaffed. If it won't be agency nurses, then who will it be? There is also concern expressed as a "Code Maroon" by the Manitoba Nurses' Union that points to a serious lack of experienced nurses in the Brandon Maternity Ward. The mayor and CAO have reached out to the union to see if they can help in any way. On a brighter note, it appears that a new paramedic will be assigned to the Carberry health centre.

The Planning District is once again interviewing applicants for their post of planner.

At the Rec Board, many of the volunteer board members have resigned.

The New Daycare Committee have been working on incorporation and have selected an as yet unreleased name. Progress on subdivision is ongoing, adding the need to officially open the stretch of Stickle Avenue west of Wellwood Road because without it, the parcel would be considered landlocked and couldn't be severed. The necessary surveys will cost the

town about \$5,000. A letter from both councils committing the land to the committee will be required.

The Drop-In Centre held its annual meeting in early January.

**Communications:**

Manitoba EMO sent word that Carberry's emergency plan has been received and approved as submitted.

The Operating Engineers, Local 987, sent word that a Shop Steward has been appointed in accordance with the collective agreement. Scott McDonald will fulfill the role.

The Epilepsy and Seizure Association of Manitoba requests that the Town join in the recognition of 'Purple Day' on March 26 in accordance with the Purple Day Act proclaimed in 2012. Various means of marking the day are suggested. Council will discuss them at the March meeting.

**Around the Table:**

Mayor Muirhead reported that he and the CAO will have discussions with the Prairie Mountain Health region in support of the work of the HAC. They also took the two new doctors out for a dinner to hear their impressions of work in Carberry. They appear to have settled in well and were positive. Contact was made with Bob Olynarnyk of Shared Health about the downtime of the X-ray machine at the Health Centre. A message of congratulation was sent to Kyra Wilson on her taking up the position of Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. On a more local note, Muirhead wishes to take action against the effects of barking dogs. They are a menace to the quality of life, particularly in the summer months when people wish to be outdoors and untroubled by the annoying sound. We have by-laws about nuisance sound, and an animal control officer. He encourages anyone troubled to come forward with a complaint so that action can be taken.

Councilor Sudak suggested that a list of worn street signs be drawn up and the necessary replacements acquired to keep the town spruced up. He warns that the snow piles that have grown throughout the winter will have to be lowered as things start to thaw, and even earlier at places like the railway crossing on Wellwood Road, where they cause dangerous drifting that is not being addressed either by MTI or CN.

Councilor Rea suggested that more sand be applied to the icy streets, particularly mentioning Fourth Avenue.

With that, Council went *in camera* to discuss preliminary matters. They adjourned at 9:10 pm.