

**Carberry Town Council,
May 12, 2020**

On Manitoba Day, May 12, 2020, the council of the Town of Carberry met in the council chambers of the Municipal Office at 7:00 pm with Mayor Olmstead in the chair, and all members present.

Finance & Accounts:

There were no delegations or planning matters, so the evening's first business was to refer the April accounts to council. Accounts totaling \$227,200.16 were approved for payment.

By-laws:

Several by-laws received second and third readings and became law. The first was a Reduced Speed School Zone By-law, #4/2020, which revises the existing by-law 2/2014, and creates a Reduced Speed School Zone that includes Main Street, Ottawa Street, First and Second Avenue where they surround the two schools, and limits the speed to 30 kph.

The second by-law passed was #5/2020, Rates of Taxation. This is the outcome of the preparation, presentation and adjustment of the Town's Financial Plan, and sets the overall rate of taxation and the rates for services and special levies. The budget is now set and tax notices will go out in the next few weeks. Council expressed their approval of the administration's work on the plan and by-law; it was well and professionally done.

A third by-law was #6/2020, the Tax Incentive By-law. Council wants to be able to offer tax incentive financing that may help those wishing to do major renovations or set up new businesses to the town, but wants to ensure consistency and fairness, so a policy was created and set out in this by-law. It outlines the requirements for developments in four separate categories: Downtown, Residential, Industrial and Commercial. The value of the work being undertaken, the length and value of the tax rebate, and the requirements for a development agreement with timelines for completion are all laid out.

Unfinished Business:

Council was glad to hear that Zenith Paving was already in town, and working on the list of paving projects that has been agreed on, starting with the walking path along the south side of First Avenue. A dozen projects have been selected, and Zenith is expecting to work through them all before moving on. One of the most important is the repaving of the first block of Main Street. Because it's so pressing, the work will go ahead regardless, but there is hope that the town will have a chance at some of the \$250 million of provincial dollars that was announced recently for infrastructure projects. Depending on the qualifying requirements, it may be possible to add a second block of Main Street to the shopping list, or get the help with the first block project. It is, after all, a provincial designated road so there is hope for a 50/50 cost share. The Mayor and the CAO will be in touch with our MLA, Eileen Clarke, to lobby for infrastructure projects.

It will be necessary to bring motions to the next meeting to authorize the payment for these projects from the Gas Tax Account.

On the subject of paving, council was concerned that the province postpone the annual painting of the streets until the new pavement was in place. Councillor Muirhead wondered whether the new walking path may need additional lighting for safety, but only time will tell once it is complete.

Applications had been received for the post of Animal Control Officer, and Council selected the one they thought best qualified and asked the CAO to negotiate with him.

Applications had also been received for the position of Screening Officer to arbitrate any disputes over by-law enforcement. Council hired John McEntee for the position, and set his compensation.

Council has from time to time considered whether it would be an advantage to offer a free municipal Internet as an incentive for business and a feature for immigration. The Town of Morden

looked at establishing such a system; for \$350,000 they were to set up a network that provided free Internet to any citizen who bought into it. With an uptake of three to five thousand users, the proceeds were \$1.2 to \$2 million, covering the costs easily. The trouble came when speed standards increased, and to upgrade to glass fibre transmission was going to cost over \$6 million, and the project had to be scrapped. The rapid changes in technology seem to restrict the field to the giants who can afford the upgrades.

Here in Carberry, there are two competitors offering glass fibre high-speed: Bell/MTS and Westman Communications Group. Nearby in the area, and serving the McCain plant is RFNOW. Though the town may not consider competing as a service provider, there may be a value in providing more robust Wi-Fi "hot spots" to help those who don't have or can't afford their own high-speed connection. Possible locations for these upgrades would be the library and the municipal office. Without going to a full service provider status, there are municipalities like Hamiota that provide internet to their residents in some form or other. Councilor Anderson, who has been doing the research, will keep an eye on such projects.

The feedlot to the west of town, which has been in intermittent use since the 1960's, is looking to establish a figure for its capacity. It was first built to accommodate over 6000 head, and is physically suited to that number, but that may well be beyond what is now allowed over the aquifer, and so close to residential properties. Since the manure management regulations went into force, both Planning and Sustainable Development/Water Stewardship have had a say in what may be done and where. In the last decades, the greatest number of animals seen at the feedlot is around 2500. The owners are seeking to establish a firm figure for the lot's capacity, and the decision is in the lap of North Cypress-Langford. Council had various concerns around the table concerning the possible increase in animal units to the facility. Council decided to send a letter to NCL, with copies to the various departments involved, detailing their concerns and recommending that a level be set that any attempt to increase past the upper threshold would trigger a Conditional Use hearing and involve public and government input. From the town's viewpoint, the land at the west end of town, where development is already taking place, needs to be protected both from the nuisance of odours generated upwind, and from any contamination of the aquifer water on which all the residents depend.

Council resolved to compensate a residence on Baron Bay for the cleanups required when a blockage on town property caused sewer backups into their property.

Council decided to forego the annual raise to the hourly rate paid to councilors on town business. The 2019 rates will be maintained until 2021.

General Business:

A ratepayer on Wheatland Drive has inquired whether the town would be prepared to help with the cost of controlling the caraganas planted along his property line, and also a mature aspen that had suckered onto his property. His feeling was that the choice of the invasive caraganas was irresponsible, and the suckering of the aspen a result of inadequate maintenance. Council agreed that the problems could have been avoided, but noted that the plantings were done by the developer many years previous, not the town.

A ratepayer has discovered that they have been assessed for "other property" for a home-based business that has been closed for the past 20 years. Now that the Assessment Branch has been informed, the assessment will not appear on subsequent tax bills, and the town will cancel the charge on the past two years' taxes (the limit they are allowed).

The Manager of Parks, Facilities & Sanitation has found a previously purchased set of outdoor exercise equipment in storage, and asked to install it in Art Sear Park. Council thought it a good idea, and urged him to go ahead when it becomes possible to make these changes to outdoor facilities.

The CAO asked to take advantage of the additional services of their payroll firm Payworks, who

offer a system for online paystubs and T-4s at a very moderate per-employee fee. Several present had experience with the system and spoke well of it. The CAO was encouraged to go ahead.

Correspondence:

Whitemud Watershed sent its Board meeting minutes and those of District #38.

Steve Denton sent council a letter stating his feeling that council had not sufficiently addressed his concern over Councilor Tolton's apparent breach of confidentiality. He intends to complain to the Manitoba Ombudsman if he is not given a satisfactory response. Council has consulted its files and spoke with the Ombudsman's office, and feels it has responded correctly. A follow-up letter has been sent.

Constable Kuik wrote to ask about complaints he has received from a ratepayer on Market Street about vehicles speeding past his house. The CAO suggested that a three-way stop be set up at the intersection of Market and Second. This would probably work better than the speed bumps and signs the ratepayer suggested. It will involve an amendment to the traffic by-law, but there are a couple of other spots that could be changed as well. Speed bumps are not being considered because of the problem they cause the plough blades in winter. Council Muirhead advised that there are portable temporary speed bumps that can be installed for the summer only. While in place, they are fairly abrupt, and very effective. Public works will investigate.

North Cypress-Langford sent word that upon consideration they did not agree with the 'zero-sum' calculation nor wish to pay the calculated cost in regards to changes to the CAO structure previously agreed upon. Council was not surprised and will wait upon the office structure report due at the end of the year.

The AMM warns of the loss of autonomy and extra cost threatened by Bill 48, which centralizes planning authority and gives greater power to the Municipal Board. They encourage all municipalities and administrators to write and object.

Evergreen Environmental sends its audited financial statements for 2019.

Western Manitoba Municipal Libraries also sends an audited financial statement, which was noted to show a large enough liquid balance that it made their requests for rent relief rather moot. Council discussed sitting down and working out an agreement that settles who is responsible for what within the building.

CN advises that they will be doing vegetation management along their rights of way.

Around the Table:

Councilor Tolton mentioned that on his way to the meeting, he saw that the swings at the school were in use, contrary to COVID-19 regulations. He was reminded that they are the property of the School Division, and not the town's direct concern.

He also mentioned that the rain barrel at the back of the museum is in need of a lid; its absence is a safety hazard. The museum also has been working on its airbase memorial, and will be ready to do concrete framing as soon as the weather warms up. Overhanging trees will be being pruned by members of the board.

Councilor Sudak mentioned that some of the flags the town flies around town are becoming worn, and in need of replacement.

He is glad that the town has become more proactive and plans ahead for paving and maintenance projects. He proposed that a leg of the walking path network should be put along Market Street, along with appropriate trees.

He also reported on a spruce tree overhanging a hydrant that should be pruned or cut before it has a chance to fall and create a safety hazard.

Councilor Muirhead asked if there was to be a Blue Cross premium rebate in regards to the

employee benefits. The CAO replied that he had a motion prepared to that effect.

He also noted that there are some derelict-looking trailers along Market Street, and he wondered what could or should be done about them. Is it a matter for talking to the landlord or to the individual renters? It seems that the problem is more properly that of the individual renters, and the authority to request improvement is that of the Planning District, who administer the Maintenance and Occupancy regulations.

Lastly, he expressed concern that at the recent Joint Councils' meeting. Even though Council was "socially distanced" those attending should be reminded that if they are coughing or feel ill that they should not attend.

The first rule during a pandemic is: ***"If you don't feel well, stay home."***

Councilor Sudak mentioned that he had noticed several places in town where trailers had been set up in back yards and were being inhabited over several months. Particularly during the pandemic there is no harm in temporary use of recreational vehicles as accommodation, but when an RV with out of province plates sits inhabited right through winter, someone is flouting zoning regulations. The habitation density of the property is being stretched, and without permission. Council has dealt with this before in a previous matter. This is a matter for the Planning Officer.

Councilor Anderson asked what progress had been made in opening the building next door for use as a washroom during uses of the CP park. He was advised that the manager of Parks, Facilities & Sanitation is looking into the details of the project.

Mayor Olmstead asked whether SafeSidewalks had been scheduled — they have been.

He wondered whether it was time to open the Art Sear Park. The regulations for outdoor facilities are being eased, but will still require a strict inspection and sanitization protocol. After discussion, it was decided that the reopening should be brought before council each meeting until it is clearly desirable and safe, and a proper protocol can be drawn up. The point was made that the effect of COVID-19 on children is still very little understood. Their symptoms don't match older peoples', and they may be dangerously effective vectors in contagion. Council does not want the park to become the source of a cluster of infections.

With that, and best wishes for the 150th Manitoba Day he concluded.

CAO Stephenson started by suggesting that in the interests of transparency and engagement, the agenda of council meetings should be published a week in advance of the meeting. Whether or not this attracts more public participation, it is a valuable step towards transparency. This will require members to bring their agenda concerns to the CAO earlier, but it still allows last minute additions if necessary; they will appear in the minutes and report. Council was enthusiastic about the idea and encouraged him to go ahead.

He also mentioned that he had been asked for a "Coles Notes" summary of the budget. Gladwyn Scott suggested it, and would include it in his notes published in The Banner. Again this was agreed to be a good idea.

A further suggestion arising from his studies in Municipal Administration is to hold a "Vision Meeting" to bring out and compare long term goals. These would be the sorts of thing that a Strategic Plan would try to bring about, but more fleshed out. Again, the council agreed that this was an excellent plan and asked him to set up a date for a meeting.

The Commissionaires are still examining and critiquing the by-laws they will be enforcing. They are to come and spend a day drawing up a list of the sort of things that they would consider priorities, for comparison with the concerns expressed by council and ratepayers. They would come before council to discuss and compare priorities. Next they would come for a day of warnings and education, getting attention drawn to by-laws that aren't being adhered to. The likely time frame is within the next two months.

The Garbage and Sewer By-laws are nearing the end of their term, and in need of revision. The costs of garbage pickup and disposal are outstripping the revenues from the Garbage by-law by almost 35% — \$50,000. The situation with the Sewer By-law is better, but it too will have to be revised to allow a larger sewer reserve to be built up for the purposes of the lagoon expansion. Updating the garbage levy will require a hearing by the Municipal Board, which isn't too much of a delay. The Sewer By-law, however, has to go before the Public Utilities Board, and that can be a very long process.

The CAO has had an inquiry about the purchase of one of the two lots the town owns on the south side of the west end of Fourth Avenue. They are zoned M2 Industrial. It would be best to request bids on the properties to ensure that the sale is fair.

Stephenson expressed his pleasure to find that the fence beside the house on Fourth Avenue that was out of compliance with the zoning regulations has been repositioned and lowered as requested. He will send a letter of thanks to the homeowner.

Councilor Tolton has noticed an amount of furniture set out for garbage, and left around the dumpsters. The town will pick up oversize garbage items for a small fee. Mayor Olmstead suggested that if you can't lift it into the dumpster, it probably wasn't supposed to go there in the first place. A discussion developed of the ongoing problem of misused dumpsters. The Credit Union has acquired small lockable dumpsters, which may perhaps solve the problems that have arisen. Since everyone in town can get pickup of household garbage every week, there should be little use for household garbage dumpsters. The dumpsters are for the convenience of businesses. If the small lockable dumpsters suit TAC, they can be set near the users, locked, and the big ones removed, perhaps sold back to TAC to offset the costs of the smaller ones. Recycling material can be collected at a recycling depot at the town shop. The misuse and general unsightliness of the dumpsters have been an ongoing issue for several years. Options will be debated and discussed in the near future to try and come up with a permanent solution.

With that, Council went *In Camera* to discuss personnel matters.

Council came out of *In Camera* and subsequently adjourned at 10:28 pm.