

Carberry Town Council, March 12, 2024

The Council of the Town of Carberry met on Tuesday March 12, 2024, in the council chambers of the Town Office. Mayor Muirhead was in the chair, and all council members were present, including the newly elected Councilor Debbie Rea. Also present were Youth Councilor Downey and CAO Stephenson.

Mayor Muirhead opened the meeting at 7:00 and at once congratulated and welcomed Councilor Rea, for whom this was the first meeting since her election.

Financial and Accounts:

Council accepted the report of the ACAO and the Financial Statements for February 2024 as presented. Accounts and direct withdrawals totaling \$392,786.48 were approved for payment. The draft Financial Statements for 2023, unaudited, were presented to Council and approved. Council appreciated the finding that the year had ended with a surplus of over \$55 thousand. Prudent spending and investing the reserves have paid off.

By-laws:

By-law 06/2023, which was to establish a Special Service rate for providing Recreation Services, received a first reading in December of 2023, and was forwarded to the Municipal Board for approval. No objection was presented to the Town or to the Municipal Board. The Board has approved the Special Service. The by-law was thus given second and third readings and became law after a unanimous recorded vote.

By-law 02/2024, which would establish a reserve fund for Economic Development, was given a first and second reading and referred to Council.

Unfinished Business:

A meeting of the New Daycare Committee has been called for the 20th. Four members will be attending the mandatory introduction course for new daycares from the Ministry of Education and Early Childhood Learning. When the location is settled, the committee will go ahead and operate as though there will be no RTM facility from the province. The need is too pressing to wait. If the province restores the program, we'll be even more ready.

Council appointed Shelly Rowland, who is the Weed Supervisor for North Cypress-Langford, as the Town's Weed Supervisor for 2024. A fee-for-service agreement will be negotiated with NCL. The position is mandated in the Municipal Act, but within the town limits there are very few circumstances in which it is legal to use pesticides.

Council accepted with regret the resignation of Zaine McConnell from Parks and Recreation.

Council agreed to purchase portable fence panels for the Carberry Transfer Station to prevent people from leaving the site without crossing the scale. The purchase costs will be shared 50/50 with NCL.

The Health Action Committee was disappointed that Dr. Ahmed did not show for his tour of the town's facilities. A meeting with Glenboro's committee didn't take place either. Despite this, there were some apparently positive developments still only to be discussed *in camera*.

Signage to advertise the '988' suicide hotline has been costed at \$45 each. Council discussed the placement of such signs, and authorized the CAO to purchase ten of them, and a box of posters for \$40 which can be placed at appropriate indoor locations.

General Business:

The by-election was successfully held, though the turnout was disappointing. The weather may have affected it — only 166 votes were cast, compared to the ±600 at the last general election. The winner was Debbie Rea, who has now taken her seat on Council.

Carberry Minor Ball has been awarded the U13 provincial baseball championships, to be played here in the second week of July. They have secured a grant of \$2,000 from FCC to upgrade the concession stand, and the bleachers and fencing will need attention. Further grants have been applied for, but still Parks & Rec will be needed to spruce the diamonds up to be a proper showplace when the event comes. Contributions the Town can make can be brought up at the budget discussions.

At the Transfer Station, requests for addresses have sometimes been met with hostility. The public should be assured that the aim is to weed out non-residents' garbage, which adds an unnecessary burden to taxpayers' costs.

A Letter of Intent was received from a cannabis retailer in Holland that he is considering opening a branch store in Carberry. This would bring the number of potential applicants for such a license in town to at least three. Council considered the letter and decided that they would have no problem with such a store in principle, nor even with more than one if the licensing authority would approve another. It was a good sign that entrepreneurs would agree that the Carberry market is desirable.

The deadline for resolutions to be presented to the AMM June District Convention is coming up. With a new government in place, it will be a good forum for lobbying. Council was encouraged to consider what they should propose before the April meeting.

There have been problems with parking along Main Street. Now that there are more stores filled up along the street, the day-long parking — of both the residents and the store staff — should perhaps be discouraged. This would make the businesses more accessible to their customers. For a start, a two-hour limit might be enforced. There are ways of enrolling people as by-law enforcement without calling in Sirius for one of their days. This is already being done for snow clearing. A suggestion that we might follow Neepawa's example and allow angle parking met with serious concerns about safety. Main Street is not nearly as wide as Mountain Street. Angle parking has already been scrapped on Third Avenue at Main for just that reason. It is nice to have "growing pains" of this kind; Council was encouraged to give the matter thought before making further changes to the Traffic By-law. Another detail to be considered is the provision of accessible parking along the street.

With the AMM Spring Convention coming up in Brandon, all of Council and the CAO were authorized to attend, with costs of registration, mileage and meals covered. The CAO asked that he be advised who will be attending; the deadline is approaching. When the agenda is published, it will be easier to tell whether there is particular interest in attending.

The Town is eligible for awards from the Manitoba Historical Society, and the CAO was approved to apply.

A three-year Collective Agreement has been negotiated between the Operating Engineers Local 987 and the Town on behalf of the Public Works employees. Council ratified the agreement and authorized the mayor and CAO to sign.

Council approved reinvesting a maturing GIC at the Credit Union for a further five years.

Reports:

Youth Councilor Downey's report was full for this time of year. At the Collegiate, there was a pancake breakfast on Monday, and a week of "Grade Wars," a set of little competitions that encourage spirit and engagement through the school. Some students will attend *World of Wheels* with a miniature automotive project. Student-led conferences for the junior school are this month, and the high school's next month. Grades 7&8 will head to Minnedosa for a skiing trip. Mrs. Burke's jazz band was given high marks and encouragement on their recent trip to Winnipeg. It is understood that there is a teacher shortage across Manitoba, but gaps have been soon filled in the staff. The province has made money available for a meal program; a healthy breakfast is now available for whomever wants it. In sports, the Wildcats Hockey took gold at the provincials, and the Varsity Basketball team were finalists in league play, runners up to Neepawa. The Junior Varsity Basketball team beat Neepawa soundly. Badminton and Lacrosse are going. Downey was asked if he was going to be able to take on another term as Youth Councilor in September, his final year in school. He has taken on an extensive schedule of classes. He was assured he would be welcomed, but that if he felt it better to concentrate on getting his graduation marks to their best level, he should let the Council know in time to get a replacement chosen in good time. Downey also mentioned that the questionnaire he had developed with the EDO about student uses of the Drop-In centre had come out that morning, and already had 140 responses. He was congratulated on such a response. The questionnaire closes at the end of the week.

The CAO's report mentioned several of the developments that have come up at this meeting and added that he had taken a couple of mornings at the height of the snowfall to run the grader with Public Works.

The EDO has been very busy with many projects. She will be attending the RMWF and has sourced some "swag" to hand out, in quantity enough to cover the Ag Society Fair and Homecoming. With Youth Councilor Downey, she has been polling the high school for ideas about sharing the use of the Drop-In Centre, which she will present to the Drop-In, proposing collaboration. She is also working with the developer of affordable housing and has prepared a pamphlet to hand out at the winter fair. In addition, she

has been refining her marketing campaign, and proposing several formats. She has scheduled a meeting on April 4 with members of the Shilo Military Families' Resource Centre to discuss sharing of resources between the two communities. She continues to take a leading role in the SWRRT group of EDOs, hosting two forums here at Carberry. Her project of a stage for the south end of Main Street is still in development, with a tentative budget of \$140 thousand. She hopes to attend the EDAM Conference in Portage la Prairie, where she is nominated for a 'Rising Star' award. With the Chamber of Commerce, she is seeking donations in support of the upcoming Mental Wellness Fair (April 23) whose keynote speaker has been sponsored by PMH through their Healthy Together Now grant program. In the way of business development, there is a new retailer in the Bailey Building – Bar 66 Tack & Trade – and she has several other enterprises in various states of readiness. The decommissioned church at Main and Second has been bought and will be used by a local business. Another hotel project is in the works. She will be nominating several local individuals and businesses for awards at the Tourism Westman Gala and hopes to lead a delegation there on June 12.

Councilor Rea stepped out because of a family connection to the EDO, and Council approved the attendance of the EDO at the EDAM conference. Costs to include registration, mileage, meals and accommodations. While weighing the advantages, Council asked the CAO to draft a policy that would assess whether accommodations or additional mileage would be of more effectiveness for the Town. The advantages were considered of maintaining a Town vehicle for some of the work done out of town and sparing the personal vehicles of Council and/or staff. Councilor Rea returned to the meeting.

This is the 125th year of the Carberry Fire Department, and an event to mark the fact is being planned.

Public Works has been very busy with clearing the recent snowfalls and easing the melting afterwards.

The Museum's recurring problems with its frozen water system have finally been cleared up.

The Arts Council is seeking clarification about the uses and users of the basement of 122 Main Street. Their music and art classes are well filled, and their free after-school craft program is a success.

The Handivan Committee have been given a revised quote on their new van, and offers on their old one are less than expected. A picture was taken with the Reeve, Mayor and staff receiving a cheque of \$15,000 to the Service for Seniors from the Age-Friendly funding.

The committee assignments set up after the departure of a previous Councilor will now be reversed. The mayor asked and received permission to do the reassignment. Councilor Sudak mentioned that his work now allows him more evening assignments.

Council moved to receive the reports presented.

Communications:

A letter from Jordan Dickson drew attention to a sequence of shockingly tasteless misogynist, sexist and ableist posts on social media by a local business. Though the publicity they received reflected badly on the town, there is little that Council can do about anyone's freedom of speech. The Chamber of Commerce will be asked to consider censuring them, and the matter has been brought before the MP by area residents, who has scheduled a visit to Carberry this week. Council will reply to Ms. Dickson agreeing that the posts were disgusting and insisting that Council's own views and policies ban any such behaviour, and that Carberry hopes to present itself as a welcoming place for a diverse and gender-neutral population.

The Western Manitoba Regional Library sent the minutes of their annual and regular meetings.

The Manitoba Ministry of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care sent a letter to the CAO in response to his questions about expediting the accreditation process for Internationally Educated Health Professionals [IEHPs]. Despite Carberry's being specifically mentioned in the premier's ministerial mandate letter to the Health Minister, the work continues incomplete. The CAO is assured that the work has not been set aside.

Around the Table:

Mayor Muirhead mentioned that the clearing of large piles of snow by the hospital and R.J. Waugh School was taking place at a time when children were passing the area to go to school. Visibility from a loader or dump truck is not good enough to ensure the children's safety. The work was being done by a subcontractor. Muirhead went on to mention that he had attended the

performance of the BU Chorale presented at the Community Hall by the Arts Council. It was an excellent performance, even if not as well attended as it deserved. He has been invited to a Ball at CFB Shilo; the cost will be more than worth the good will.

Deputy Mayor Kalinowich wanted to know who had been responsible for leaving the large piles of snow that had affected the visibility at several corners. He was assured that the Town's Public Works were careful about this, but subcontractors not so much, though they are, and will be, warned about it. He also mentioned a semi that had been mis parked, facing the wrong direction and blocking visibility. He praised the Public Works for the quick and thorough clearing of the recent heavy snowfalls.

Councilor Anderson welcomed the newest member of Council and wished her to find the job as rewarding as she had hoped — though, he added, "It won't be."

Councilor Rea thanked Anderson and indeed all Council for their welcome. She anticipates a lot of work getting caught up to speed.

Councilor Sudak echoed the welcome to Rea, and the kudos to Public Works for the snow removal. He asked the public's patience when the thaw comes. From experience, he knew that catching up to thawing out the culverts to keep melt levels down can be difficult.

Youth Councilor Downey asked if there was any hope of draining "Lake RJ Waugh" in the school's playing field. He was assured that the problem is a very old one, and not easily solved without thousands of yards of fill.

Les Watts, who had attended the meeting as a visitor, added that the problem at "Lake RJ Waugh" is very, very, old, going back before he can remember. He also noted that the banning of angle parking along Main Street was done for safety reasons as cars got longer and truck bodies over which visibility was impossible got higher. The problem is at its worst in winter when a snow ridge is left along the street's centre line.

With that, Council went *in camera* to discuss preliminary matters and adjourned at 9:55 pm.