

Town Council, Monday September 16, 2024

The council of the Town of Carberry met on Monday night, September 16, 2024, in their council chambers. Mayor Muirhead was in the chair, and all members were present, along with Youth Councilor Boganes and CAO Stephenson.

Delegations:

Cathie Edgar, the location manager for Normal Films Canada, appeared before Council to discuss the film preparing to be shot in Carberry. Location scouting has brought up to a dozen people at a time to examine and photograph Main Street and talk with building occupants. She had brought renderings of their plans for making the street suitable for their purposes. They are shooting a film called *Normal* produced by and starring Bob Odenkirk, which takes place in a small Minnesota town of that name, for which Carberry will do nicely as a stand-in. The company has made arrangements with four or five businesses to use their premises, is fully insured and will provide certificates of insurance to the businesses and to the Town. They will also be compensating anyone providing them with assistance. The intention is to spend five days of actual shooting, either in the first week of December or the last week of November. The script calls for a heavy snowstorm (for which they would prefer not to have the real thing) and a power outage, which will complicate the arrangements, and of course they will not wish to have evident Christmas decorations in their shots. During shooting, there will be the sort of disruption and noise that come with an action movie — car chases, gunshots, and the like, which will take place both by day and into the night. Preparation work, involving a crew of fifteen or twenty, will start three weeks in advance of shooting. During the shooting, cast and crew add up to around 120. Ms. Edgar was very appreciative of the welcome they have received, and the accommodations made for them, and Mayor Muirhead assured her of the support and appreciation of the Town.

The next delegation was from Cpl. Campbell and Cpl. Woytkiw of the Blue Hills Detachment of the RCMP. They had been invited to attend to discuss the growing problems with criminal activity and the scant staff available to handle them. While assuring Council that the problems at Carberry are quite light in the overall picture of rural crime, the corporals

agreed that their staffing has been stretched by the additional area given them when the Rivers police service was disbanded. They have received no additional members, despite the addition of so much area to cover. The detachment now serves 2,200 square miles, and a further 3,000 residents. Among the problems that have been hard to address, the actions of some motorcyclists have been repeatedly mentioned. Because the riders wear helmets with face shields and obscure or remove their license plates, even a photograph or video is unlikely to result in charges being laid. The police are further frustrated by being forbidden to give the high-speed chase necessary to catch a cycle going more than 150 Km/h. They assured the meeting that if they have someone willing to potentially attend court and testify about a crime, they will gladly press charges. In addition, they reminded us that prevention is far better than finding a perpetrator to charge. Keep your house and car locked; these aren't sophisticated criminals; a lock will generally keep them out. A perhaps greater problem is the growing threat of scams to steal banking info and identities. Never give out your information, particularly on the phone, or to an internet address that can be "spoofed." Don't follow links on suspicious emails and be particularly suspicious. This type of crime has reached a volume of more than \$500M per year in Canada. Cpls. Campbell and Woytkiw were thanked for their attendance. They reminded the meeting that they are happy to attend community events if given time enough to set up the schedules of their limited detachment.

The third delegation was from Albert Clark, who has been more and more worked up about the behaviour of some motorcyclists, who have been provocatively driving dangerously in town, threatening the safety of events like the baseball provincials, and driving fast and loudly past the schools. He reported that he had prepared some photos and names to give the RCMP and was not contacted as he had been promised. (Cpl. Campbell asked for details and will investigate.) He had recently gone so far as to get into an argument and insult some cyclists to whom he now wished to apologize, as he had gone beyond his knowledge of the perpetrators. He begged the town and the police to take whatever steps are necessary to clamp down on these provocations. The guilty are laughing at the powerlessness of the public and the police to catch them, and they think themselves untouchable. The inevitable outcome will be that people are injured, perhaps even fatally — the public, and the cyclists themselves. An even greater danger is the threat

of vigilantism, which the police remind us is criminal, where the provocation is just a Highway Traffic Act violation.

Around the table, Councilor Sudak, a first responder, spoke of the heartbreak of attending accident scenes that result from reckless driving, and begged cyclists to drive respectful of others. Councilor Rea, a nurse, spoke of the physical results of such accidents. Councilor Anderson, a paramedic of long experience, begged those involved to “take a breath” — there is more that we have in common than that divides us; nothing can justify the damage that is possible. Councilor Kalinowich echoed the concern that the only outcome of the situation is that someone will get hurt, provoker or bystander.

Mayor Muirhead thanked Clark and the many people who had come as observers to this delegation, for their concern and for their respect of the rules of delegations. He went on to say that normally the Town does not consider it useful to enter into a chain of Facebook posts, but when a motorcyclist is run off the road and the action videoed and posted to start a flurry of prejudiced and ill-considered posts, a line was crossed. The forum’s moderator failed in their duty to take the video and its chain down. With no wish to restrict freedom of speech, there are things that are either illegal or divisive, such as hate, threats and the naming of minors. The town and its administration have long been at pains to make and keep this a welcoming and caring community, and the actions of the Facebook posse are making people leave or reconsider coming, even though they are only a minority, however vocal. Hate, racism, or singling out a community by national origin cannot be allowed. Give us back our welcoming community; there is so much that we do well together. Park the anger.

Finance and Accounts:

Council accepted the report of ACAO McConnell and the Financial Statement for August 2024. They approved cheques and direct withdrawals totaling \$ 423,242.15 for payment.

By-laws:

Though the Traffic By-law’s amendment has already been given first reading, it is delayed to add a ban on the use of engine braking, and not add to the number of amendments. The delay has to do with the fact that some roads in the Town are under the joint control of MTI and the Town, and MTI must be consulted on how to make the by-law apply properly to places like the Wellwood Road.

The Special Service Levy for garbage and recycling expires this year, and the ACAO has prepared figures on the costs of these services. These figures will be discussed in committee, and a revised by-law will be drafted to stand for the next four years.

Unfinished Business:

There isn't enough time before the weather closes in to move the garage to the site of the old town shop, so for the winter there will have to be a heated temporary structure to protect the fire department's reservoir that is under part of the site.

A letter came from the ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure in response to the request for a speed limit change on Highway 5 around the town and for a ban on engine braking in the same area. The two requests are differently handled; speed changes are determined by the province on receiving a formal request while noise restrictions are a municipal matter. Help is offered in properly wording a by-law to be effective and enforceable.

Landmark Planning and Design, who are preparing specifications for the intersection of Hwys 1 & 5, sent word that they have received the Town's preferences for the treatment of the intersection. The grade separated (overpass) intersection which Council requests is one of the possibilities and will be considered when the decision is made. They have many interventions to consider, and the amount of funding available. Another two rounds of public consultation are planned, with a recommendation made to MTI after the meeting of winter 2025.

To establish a policy that users of public property should themselves be insured, as well as the municipalities, a virtual meeting has been scheduled between AMM's insurance provider and the municipalities' CAOs and the Joint Services Manager to present options and policies or regulations that will make the change smoothly and provide insurance coverage as needed at a reasonable rate and in little time.

General Business:

A resolution was presented and approved asking the AMM to "strongly urge" the province to increase the number of officers assigned to the Blue Hills detachment to cover the needs of their expanded territory which now covers the 2,200 square miles of Carberry, Souris, rural Brandon, and now Rivers. The province is asked to add also the necessary resources and support to facilitate the increase in personnel. The resolution has been

shared with all the affected municipalities, both town and rural, and may be presented to the fall convention of the Association.

In response to a request for council participation in their affairs, the mayor attended the recent meeting of the Drop-In board. He was able to explain to them the arrangements whereby the Town and NCL are the owners of the building and its infrastructure, such as installing air conditioning, looking after the building maintenance. He advised them to take full advantage of their funds and spend it before coming to the municipalities for a grant. The board remains autonomous and will not be forced to share their building as presently proposed by a committee of activities and events coordinators. He was asked if it were possible to have dumpsters sited in their lane; the trip to the back of the Community Hall with refuse after an event is exhausting. Because the fate of the Community Hall dumpsters is presently under discussion, the CAO agreed to discuss the matter with the board and the Waste Management Committee. The board has been relying on the Town's printer for their material, and asked if that would continue. The mayor encouraged them to go out and buy one of their own; it is a good use of their money.

In a change from the usual sort of graffiti, there have appeared a great number of pigeons painted at about life size — about 60 of them, on private and public property. The creators are asked to please cease and desist. It has gone beyond an amusing nuisance to a criminal matter. The birds are unwanted, and the property on which they are painted is being damaged; the act of placing them is at least trespass, possibly break and enter. If caught, they will be charged with the crime.

[At this point, a fire call required Councilor Sudak and CAO Stephenson to absent themselves; both were able to return later.]

It is time to make the registration and reservations for whomever will attend the AMM Fall Convention in November. The mayor will go, and Councilors Anderson and Kalinowich.

MEC Sudak requested approval to attend a MAMEC course module on September 24, and a Disaster Management Conference in Winnipeg on October 16-18.

In response to a request from CN Rail and Operation Lifesaver (a public/private partnership to raise rail safety awareness) Council passed a resolution declaring *Rail Safety Week* to be held from September 23 – 29.

The availability of housing for temporary and locum medical staff has been an asset to the community's efforts to keep the health centre staffed and open. A building right opposite the health centre that has been being rented for the purpose has been put up for sale, and Council resolved to purchase it. The cost will be taken from the Health Care Reserve and from the Future Capital Infrastructure Reserve. The Town will be the only owner of the property.

The cost of the upgrade to the Town's lagoon is a moving target as time passes and engineering specifications evolve. The firm of Burns Maendel will be asked to give an up-to-date costing of the project for which much of the money has been granted and is now in interest-bearing securities.

An unpaid receivable invoice was added to the taxes of the defaulter.

Reports:

In his first report of his term, Youth Councilor Boganes announced that Carberry Collegiate is at its peak of enrolment at 319 students. There was good turnout for the recent Terry Fox Run. The Student Council staged a Scavenger Hunt. The Varsity Boys won a tournament in Glenboro. Training has started for cross-country running. Ten students from Carberry will play on the Neepawa Collegiate football team. The Student Council president will be Kaycee McCorquodale and vice-president will be Jackson McCutcheon. A lot of Carberry students will be going up to Neepawa on September 27 for an Indigenous Culture Day. The BPSD has been awarded \$50,000 for its nutrition program, and it will be used to provide fruit, energy bars and other breakfast staples for whomever wants it at the start of the day. The peer mentors and the yearbook staff are organizing for the new school year. The Student Council will be selling 50# bags of potatoes again as a fundraiser. Boganes was asked to take back to the student body Council's concerns about the misuse of Facebook, and to discourage climbing on board any of the flurries of negative posts.

Public Works report that the month started with preparation for the monument at the north end, and with work on the lagoon, where the crossover pump has been repaired and all three guns are now in operation again. Wayfinder signs were installed opposite R.J. Waugh School and in front of the Drop-In. Two trucks have been purchased for Public Works and are awaiting their decals. After a competitive tender, Cody Campbell Contracting will be given the replacement of 200' of concrete sidewalk.

Quotes to change the lights in the shop have been slow to arrive. Council expressed hope that the lines on Fourth Avenue would be done soon.

The CAO took some holidays in August and was proud of how well the staff managed in his absence. At the MMA conference he was elected Vice President, which should give him some excellent networking opportunities. As the end of September approaches, the office will be very busy with last-minute tax payers.

The Economic Development Officer has been pursuing the details of placing the three signs along Highways 1&5. There are leases to be negotiated and permits from MTI and quotes from the installer. The total cost is expected to be around \$11,000 of which the Town would pay 50%, sharing with NCL. She is looking to place an ad in Portage Arena and has designed and ordered pamphlets to be handed out at trade shows and tourist information booths. She expects to attend the U of M Career Fair. With the Archivist and the Librarian, she is promoting an oral history project. She has led a joint presentation that the Arts Council, the Manager of Joint Services, the Director of Leisure Services, and the Librarian have put together with input from the CC student body to share the use of the Drop-In Centre for youth activities.

The Buildings Committee have ordered the necessary concrete work at the Transfer Station to enter and leave the rebuilt scale. They have been asked to provide a door in the Drop-In Centre direct from the Seniors' Coordinator's office to the outside.

Evergreen has filled their third cell, but there is subsidence enough in the first and second cells to allow more use. The fourth and fifth cells are ready, and their use has been approved by the provincial government. The gasifier has received a full engineering approval, and a permit for its use is under study by the provincial government.

The Arts Council will not be able to get some grants for which they applied so they are changing their approach. Their piano lessons with Irene Wong-Montgomery are almost fully subscribed and they are offering lessons in other instruments. Their bracelet making project drew 27 attendees. The Handmade Market is scheduled for November 16, and an all-ages talent show for November 24. The Youth Business Fair will reprise in May of 2025. A course in stained glass is offered by Pat Graham with instruction and materials included in the cost. The after-school arts program is restarting.

The Arts Council's lease on the Old Town Hall is expiring; they intend to send a letter to discuss a renewal.

Service for Seniors is looking for drivers who would like to use their own vehicle to convey clients to appointments and/or shopping in Brandon and Winnipeg. Council wondered if it were practical to acquire a vehicle for S4S to be used this way and save volunteers' private vehicles.

The Health Action Committee is happy to welcome the new doctor, Dr. Dalia Bushara, who has just started full-time at the clinic. Those without a local physician can put their name on the list to be assigned to her. Apparently, another doctor is expected soon to be placed here as well. Mayor Muirhead reported that he had been interviewed at length by Dr. Brian Goldman whose program *White Coat, Black Art* runs regularly on the CBC. He also interviewed Loretta Oliver of the Health Action Committee, nurse practitioner Sherie Wray, and CAO and first responder Grady Stephenson. His subject is the problems facing rural medical services, and how they have been addressed. The committee is looking to choose a new member and has yet to decide among the applicants.

Cypress Planning District has now been approved to issue the more complex Part III building permits.

There will be a meeting of the Assiniboine Delta Aquifer Management Advisory Board in November to which both Whitemud Watershed and the Town will be asked to send representatives.

The Daycare Committee held a successful pie-in-the-face fundraiser during Homecoming and have more plans for the fall.

Communications:

Manitoba Transport and Infrastructure replied to the request to reduce the speed limit and ban the use of engine braking on the stretch of Highway 5 that passes the town.

AMM announced that registration is now open for their Fall Convention on November 25-27. They also advised that there will then be an election for executive committee members, a president and two vice-presidents, and called for nominations.

Shilo Military Family Resource Centre invited the Town to participate in their MFRC Symposium on October 23.

Jenna Kanski-Reykdal wrote in response to a Town Facebook post that spoke of the harm done by misinformation disseminated on social media. That the reference had not been to her daughter's harrowing experience of racial bigotry, and was not being characterized as misinformation, was but small comfort. Her letter was read into the minutes of the meeting.

Around the Table:

Mayor Muirhead reported that a homeowner doing repairs to his property had replaced 15' of 4' concrete sidewalk and sent an invoice to the Town. The repairs were indeed necessary, and within the sidewalk repair budget. Should such an invoice be paid? After some discussion, Council felt that the precedent of paying for work that had not been approved in advance was unacceptable. It will be declined. Muirhead also noted that the resolution passed tonight about RCMP staffing levels at Blue Hills has been shared with all the municipalities within the detachment's catchment, and will be brought to the Fall Convention despite the fact that it short-circuits the usual procedure of being first presented to a spring regional conference.

Councilor Anderson returned to the problems that gave rise to the much-attended delegation this evening, and begged that we not take any provocations that lead to the sort of thoughtless discrimination that weakens the bonds of community and natural kindness. We have so much in common that small differences are unimportant.

Councilor Rea asked who is responsible for mowing the ditches at the west end of town. There are parts of PTH351 inside the town limits that are actually the responsibility of the province.

Councilor Sudak gave appreciation of the work of the Homecoming '24 committee; it was welcoming and had details to interest all ages and interests. He explained that he had come to the town because of its welcome and openness and fallen in love with it. The present social media storm damages that feeling. He would like to find a way to bring back the openness and welcome for diversity that first brought him here.

Youth Councilor Boganés asked for details of Dr. Goldman's interviews, and the mayor explained that the change over two years from a clinic with only a single nurse practitioner and a closed ER to a regularly opened ER with two doctors and two nurse practitioners was remarkable. Goldman was asking how the change was made, asking Muirhead about the politics, Oliver about the community mobilization, Wray about her position in the middle of

it, and Stephenson about details of the lobbying and also his viewpoint as a first responder. Boganes thanked the mayor and passed on to the Council a gift of pens from the administration of the Collegiate.

With that, Council went *in camera* to discuss personnel matters and adjourned at 10:20 pm.