Joint Councils, September 22, 2025

The Committee of the joint councils of the Town of Carberry and the Municipality of North Cypress-Langford met in the municipality’s council chamber at 7:00 p.m. on September 22, 2025, with Mayor Muirhead in the chair and Councilors Sudak, VanDamme, Kalinowich and Rea from the Town, Councilors Davidson, Olmstead, Tolton and Van Kommer for NCL. Regrets from Councilors Murray and Jardine and Reeve Drayson.

**Delegations:**

The first delegation was from Chief McCallum and Deputy Chief Witherspoon of the Carberry North Cypress-Langford Fire Department. They had brought a number of concerns for the councils and hoped not to be held to the usual 15-minute time limit. Assured of the councils’ continued attention, they began with a report on some of their equipment. They have sold Unit #107, put the money into their reserve fund, and purchased a new 1-ton truck with a box suitable for the snuffer unit. OFC has given them a snuffer mounted on a skid that can be loaded into it and withdrawn if the unit is needed for other things. Unit #106 will be needing a new set of tires at once; #102 will have to go to Mid-Plains for service. The U of M Aggies will be bringing their bed push for STARS and the Manitoba Farmer Wellness Program to town on Friday September 26, and fire trucks will lead and follow them through town.

Chief McCallum presented a proposed Deployment Policy, which would cover the steps necessary to properly deploy the department and ensure that the payment for the deployment was forthcoming. The rules by which pay is covered by the OFC are clear, and departures from their requirements are usually not paid, and the joint municipalities are left with the bill. Where major fires call on all available firefighters, the OFC undertakes to pay them. Payment for the work done during the defence of Flin Flon is still forthcoming, it has taken this long to tidy the backlog in paperwork caused by the “all hands on deck” event. CNCLFD is still owed a considerable sum for the use of a pumper in that campaign. Providing the funding comes through, its trip north should be quite profitable for the department. On the subject of the wildfire deployment, Chief McCallum was asked who was responsible for ensuring that the individual firefighters were in fact approved to go by their families and employers. The Town, for example, had been forced to work without its CAO for an unplanned duration. McCallum said that he asked and trusted that firefighters to be deployed ensured that they had the knowledge and permission of families and employers and admitted that when he started to advise the municipalities, he would normally call the CAO, who was, in this case, sitting beside him in the pumper. It was a while before word got to the Council. Some, indeed, only heard when CNCL’s pumper appeared on Facebook, to the general alarm of many residents, who were afraid that they had been left unprotected. McCallum explained that there was nearly a full complement of firefighters available to the area, with the necessary pumper and support vehicles, and officers to command. The meeting cautioned McCallum to make sure that both municipalities were promptly and properly informed.

McCallum pointed out that in accordance with Fire Commission standards, the front-line pumper must be retired after ten years, and it is nine years old. It is time to consider its replacement. There is about $450,000 in the reserve, and between $50,000 and $90,000 due from the OFC for the use of the pumper in Flin Flon, but what he would suggest is that the present pumper and the rescue truck be traded in and a cab-over rescue pumper capable of transporting up to six firefighters be acquired at an estimated cost of (at least) $900,000. Operationally, the advantage of such a unit would be that the first unit deployed to a fire can hold enough firefighters to safely combat a fire. The present unit, which carries only two, must wait for a second unit to bring help, or to start fighting the fire with an unsafe complement. McCallum suggests that the councils budget to keep in mind the recurring requirement to upgrade the firefighting equipment and set aside an amount each year to meet the eventual need, and its surely inflated cost.

McCallum proposed that he draft a policy to cover the hiring and replacement of the Chief and officers, and the handling of internal hiring. Councils agreed that this would be an advantage and asked him to go ahead with the draft.

McCallum also had a proposal to set up a revised pay scale. He likes the system in Austin that pays all firefighters the same OFC rate [$24.47/hr.] when on a call, because all jobs on a site are equally necessary. There are then indemnities for such additional duties as paperwork. He has found that he needs about 40hr./mo. to attend to paperwork. An alternative arrangement found in Neepawa is to make the Chief an 0.4 FTE employee. He has not yet done a detailed cost comparison between the systems but hopes to provide one before budget time. It was agreed that a full 9-month accounting would be easy to extrapolate into an annual figure.

Lastly, he had a suggestion that officers attending conferences and training out of town be given the same treatment that councilors and administrators get for accommodations, meals and mileage, and have a similar benefit for the use (or supply) of their cell phones. The meeting agreed that this was a fair request and should be covered in policy.

Witherspoon and McCallum were thanked and congratulated for their presentation.

The next delegation was from the Museum Board. Brad Wells and Melanie Lavich appeared before the meeting to report on the work of their committee. The Museum had a very successful year, with more visitors than ever, and some meaningful upgrades to their displays. Their big announcement was that they are undertaking a new display in a new building to be erected on their grounds. It will tell the story of the “Beginnings of the Potato Industry in Carberry”. The display will be housed in a pole shed expected to cost around $60,600. They are in touch with several granting agencies, Stride Credit Union, Westoba’s Inspire program, McCain’s, the Carberry and Area Community Foundation, and other possible supporters. There will be displays of equipment, interpretive photographs and so forth, but what they are really hoping to showcase are the stories. It’s a remarkable tale, starting in 1959 with a meeting between Ag rep Welland Stonehouse, the mayor, and a banker. A development corporation was formed, with an inaugural meeting in December of 1959, and they set to work. Suddenly they were informed on a Monday that they would be allowed to purchase the Flight School’s airport for $62,000. The hitch was that it would have to be ready and liquid on Friday — and they all pitched in and had the money ready by the deadline. They invited J.R. Simplot up to have a look, and Carberry’s subsequent history was under way. Each of the first six producers have stories, and these will all be on show. It is an exhilarating story of resource and persistence, and it should be a proud memorial and a tourist magnet.

The site is measured out, a deal is being negotiated with South End Lumber, the Planning District will be asked for a permit, and the work can start. Wells particularly wanted to give kudos to Board Co-Chair Marion Whitmore, who has worked long and hard to bring this project into being.

The meeting congratulated Wells and Lavich on their exciting project and wished them well with a promise to help in any way they could.

**Unfinished Business:**

A meeting was held with representatives from both municipalities, from Tri-Wave, and from Burns Maendel. The campground’s cost overruns were examined and explained, but at $750,000 they are remarkably close to initial estimates and quotes. The trees are planted, the rough wiring in place, and Smart’s are in the process of completing the installation and getting the work inspected. With sod for the open ground, the facility can be open in spring. Still to be addressed is a building to house water treatment, washrooms, an office and concession, but that can be done after the site is open to campers. Given that there will be quite an amount of grass to cut and other duties, there will have to be another joint employee taken on to handle the work.

**General Business:**

Recent changes to the administration and the Rec Board leave the banking permissions out of date. Councils agreed to add Callie Sudak and Ray Muirhead as signing authorities for the CPCC’s bank account at Westoba, and to officially remove Grady Stephenson and Jamie Smart from the positions.

It was decided that a joint casual worker will be hired to work at the rink and the Transfer Station for the winter season, as requested by the joint foreman.

At 122 Main Street, the joint employees — Archivist and Arts/Leisure Director — have been sharing the printer in the Cypress Planning office. If the Planning Division secretary will continue to log the others’ usage and charge them, it will be more effective than acquiring a separate printer for each of the offices, particularly because of the quality of colour prints available from Planning’s printer.

The cleaner for 122 Main Street has been under an unchanged contract for a long time. Councils agreed that the job should be tendered at regular intervals, perhaps three years, and the inevitable rise in price accepted. Whether all joint properties would be tendered together was discussed, and it was agreed that each building would most likely be tendered separately. A policy to this effect will be drawn up.

The floor in the planner’s office is badly worn at the desk and will be costly and disruptive to repair. Councils agreed to address the problem with a protective mat for the moment, and to budget for the repair next year.

**Reports:**

The Manager of Joint Services reports that the ice plant was restarted on September 5, the ice is in, and the Zamboni is back from the mechanic and fitted with sharpened blades. The Olympia is in for a quote for repairs. The rink heating is being installed. Once inspected, it will be working for the start of the season. The Community Hall and the Old Town Hall exterior have been sprayed for maple bugs. The Hall’s generator is still awaiting completion of the paperwork required. The library’s stucco is paused, waiting for the contractor to resume the work. The museum and gingerbread house water will shortly be turned off for the season. The same for the ball diamonds. Their sprinkler lines are to be blown out. A replacement door for the Handivan shed is ordered and awaiting delivery and installation. The three dumpsters at the Transfer Station have been repaired and returned. A controlled burn will be done with help from the fire department. The transfer station was broken into recently, but no apparent losses were incurred.

The Director of Arts and Recreation will be restarting ‘Tots’ Time’ on October 20 and is seeking grant funding to add activities to the program. The Senior Craft and Coffee restarts in early October; only a few signed for the craft so far, but the coffee and chat will draw a fair number as well. A CPCC user group meeting discussed the staffing, updates to the building, the streaming service installation, and some rule changes and additions. Mass registration went well, but numbers are down because most groups have on-line sign-ups. It remains to be seen if the user groups will want a spring mass registration at all. The Halloween Dance will not have the support of the Arts Council this year, but the Director will attempt to get the event going with the help of friends and volunteers. Karate has nearly enough sign-ups to break even, and there is still time to improve. The Manitoba Theatre for Young People’s first PD Day Camp was a bit short of volunteer help, but it was well done and valuable. The Director will be applying for the same grant next year. After School Arts will restart October 7. The Handmade Market is already well subscribed, and a canteen provider is being sought. The director has made the move to the office in the Old Town Hall and is settling in well, with two grant applications to the CACF (one for Arts, one for Recreation) and a couple of other grants being explored. She will continue to be available to CPCC users as she manages pool and booth. Her contact information is posted.

The Archivist has been busy creating self-guided brochures on the town of Brookdale, school cairns, and the cemetery. There will be a walking tour of the cemetery themed around the history of the Town’s mayors, with the help of Exit Stage Left to animate the presentation. The Manitoba Historical Society’s plaques for the airfield and the Wop May House have arrived. An unveiling of the former is planned for October 7 at McCain’s.

The HAC went to Neepawa with the Carberry doctors to discuss sharing resources. The availability of well-paid extra ER work in Neepawa could make a talking point for physician recruitment here.

Evergreen has abandoned any hope of using the gasifier and has been researching shredders and crushers to get better use of their cells.

The Westman Regional Library has been drawing up their budget for 2026, and added 7.5 hr./wk. to the time of their marketing and communications person to cover Neepawa, Carberry and Glenboro. The per capita fee will increase by 4.6%, which is lower than most libraries have been forced to charge.

The cemetery is closing up for the season and hoping to top up the flower beds at the graves where they have subsided into the ground.

The Daycare has revised their site plan to reposition the building and its parking spaces so as to facilitate the provision of sewer services and save as much as $200,000. Their provincial grant will not cover the funding for the basement rooms which will not be brought online in the first phase of the facility’s use. There will, however, be a chance for the facility to be an interning site for college students training for ECE certification. The committee is fundraising for all the small stuff they will need in addition to the building the province funds.

**Around the Table:**

Councilor Sudak congratulated the cooperation between the Archives, the Museum, and the Library to form a Tourism Committee. Between them, some very attractive displays and events can be provided for visitors.

Councilor Olmstead has visited the Transfer Station and reports that it is good looking and well staffed. She also is on the planning for the Christmas party for the RM staff and asked if the Town was coming on board. The reply was that for Town workers, the plan has changed from providing an invitation to an event that few attend to providing a choice of grocery gift basket alternatives, which seems likely to get more buy-in and appreciation.

With that, the councils went *in camera* to discuss preliminary matters.