

## Joint Councils, December 1, 2025

The Joint Councils' Committee of the Town of Carberry and the Municipality of North Cypress-Langford met in the Municipality's council chambers on December 1, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. This was actually the November meeting, postponed to clear Councils' schedule for the AMM convention in the previous week. Mayor Muirhead was in the chair, and from the Town were Councilors Kalinowich, Van Damme, and Rea, while from NCL were Councilors Olmstead, Jardine, Tolton, Murray and Van Kommer. CAOs Parker and McConnell were in attendance, the latter by Teams. Joint Services Manager Syrik was present to observe.

### **Unfinished Business:**

While waiting for delegations, the committee considered the tenders received for the cleaning of 122 Main Street. A resolution was passed accepting the tender of Dylan Haney, as presented.

The committee agreed to sell by tender the old 250cc quad that has been used for weed control.

### **General Business:**

The committee discussed the wages of the joint employees not under contract and agreed to provide a COLA at the rate of Manitoba's November rate of inflation.

The Committee passed a revised and updated Confidentiality Policy and agreement to be followed by all employees of the Town or the Municipality.

### **Delegations:**

Charmaine Virtucio of Western Financial Group attended by Teams to explain the AMM's insurance policy which Western Financial created and manages. Their association with AMM goes back to 1970, a 45-year history. Included in their service is an employee benefits package. They serve 165 municipalities and like organizations, but not the City of Winnipeg which is in a different situation. A feature of their program is that a part of the coverage is a member-owned self-insurance plan, which enables them to return a portion of the premiums each year. She also stressed that there is no requirement for members to co-insure, a feature of most comparable policies. This means that the one premium is all that is required. Each location insured is covered up to \$10 million, and there is no limit on the number of locations. There is also a \$50 million liability coverage, which applies to directors and officers as well. Surveys regularly run show an overwhelming positive response among members served.

She was asked about whether remediation for asbestos was covered and replied that asbestos is typically excluded. A question about special events elicited that they must have their own coverage but can be covered by Western through an online portal that has been set up. She is available at any time to advise and quote. Most things can be economically covered, but it does depend on the risk involved. For example, demolition derbies are not insurable.

She was asked about the proposed splash park. To the extent that it is a program of the Recreation Department, it is covered, but it should be listed. An application would be needed.

The coverage being purchased can be of three types: Full replacement cost, a depreciated value, or an agreed value. The amount this represents of course affects the cost of the coverage. The figure can be adjusted at renewal time, or indeed at any time. Cost changes will be prorated. It is possible also to vary the deductible amount for each location. The basic is \$2,500, but it can be changed to \$5 thousand, \$10 thousand, or more, for a reduction in the premium.

Ms. Virtucio concluded that she is always available to members to give advice, clarify, or make changes to the policy. She has left a spreadsheet of all the locations covered with the CAOs. She thanked the committee for their time.

She was in turn thanked for her information and help.

The next delegation was from the Splash Park Fundraising Committee, represented by Claudette Christison and Alyssa Hall. They presented a detailed list of the cost and yield of each of their fundraising initiatives. They have just over \$235 thousand saved and are starting to look at detailed costs and sources of further funding. Grant application season is upon us. When they asked for quotes, they were advised that a lot depends on the water system that will be used. The parameters needed are the volume, pressure and potability of the water available, and what is planned for the used water. These engineering questions can only be answered by the employees who work with the water in the area. The supplier's representative has offered to discuss this on a Teams call, and Manager Syrik said he would be available to do so. Councilor Kalinowich added that he would as well. The Splash Park Committee's intention is to make available a plan of their proposed facility, with the various fixtures explained and costed, so that once the facility is sited, serviced and landscaped, people and companies can be offered a chance to add the individual fixtures in exchange for recognition on the fixture or nearby. The hope is to have a visible goal, with costs of all stages on the way. The Councils agreed that it

is high time to establish a strategic plan for the project, which may also include the next steps for the campground, and find out what needs to be done, in what order and at what cost.

The Splash Park people have been posting their financial statements and their plans on their Facebook page, and wonder if this is the best way to reach the community. They were assured that it is a good start, and that putting the more detailed plans and spreadsheets on their website and linking to it with a QR code that was widely distributed was another effective step, along with posters and the Newsletter. There is probably no one way to reach all demographics, but the willingness to try is commendable.

The third delegation was from the Carberry Plains Arts Council, represented by their chair, Candace Church. She was presenting a proposal that her board had drafted which would see the board dissolved and a new 'Program Advisory Committee' established. The reasons start with a dissatisfaction with the amount of administrative responsibility left with the board, which leaves little time and enthusiasm for their primary purpose, as they see it: the developing and delivering of impactful art programming. There is added frustration because so little of their dialogue is done in person, often only through intermediaries like their part-time director and the representatives of Joint Services. Church pointed out that the same was true of the Recreation Board, with the result that their board simply walked out. The Arts Council Board really didn't want to walk out too but had to look at another way to do business. They are committed to bringing art programming to the area and fear the personal and mental health consequences of losing it.

A problem that makes the development of program difficult is the lack of a dedicated space. When they attend conventions of arts programmers, they find they are the only ones without a dedicated space. The basement of 122 Main Street was to be theirs, and indeed they contributed thousands of their dollars to the renovation of the building [as Councilor Tolton, who was the Chair of the Arts Council at the time, can attest] but now they find they are simply another tenant, and others store their equipment in their space, and two- or three-day workshops are practically impossible. The costing of programs that have to incorporate space rental puts many desirable classes and projects out of reach of those who most need them.

Councilors could clearly hear the level of frustration behind Church's calm presentation. Councilor Murray put it clearly: "Thanks for not quitting," and the phrase was used again and again as committee members expressed their responses. The value of Arts Programming was unquestioned, and the discussion centred on how to give the Arts Council the power and freedom to

develop it. Church was invited to keep directly in touch with the Committee and “hang in there.” Changes will be made, and a more direct and personal communication of the Arts Council’s needs and concerns will be facilitated. The Arts Council proposes to draft a short charter outlining the committee’s purpose and scope, and to proceed to dissolve the board in favour of a committee of “artists, educators, community leaders, and others who are passionate about the arts and committed to community enrichment” whom they would set out to recruit. In passing, they suggest that a similar process be set up for the Recreation Board. The Joint Councils Committee thanked Church for her presentation and her frankness, and with a further injunction to please not quit they returned to their meeting.

With most of the councils’ members present, the opportunity was taken to establish a date for a joint budget meeting. It will take place on January 15 at 6:00 p.m. The effort to involve all members raised the question of just how necessary these full attendance meetings might be. The intention had been to meet monthly only until the Joint Services Agreement was finalized and in place. It was pointed out, however, that the last three meetings have each had four delegations, which speaks to a need for a joint forum. Still, it was agreed that meetings can and should be skipped if there are few details to be discussed. The January meeting is to be the inaugural meeting, at which the final details of the Joint Services Agreement are to be settled.

The province has sent the reimbursement for the firefighters and apparatus that went north to fight wildfires. The Town and Municipality received a considerable amount for their contribution to the emergency. The profit will be put into the fund for the new pumper purchase.

Councilor Van Kommer reported that he had visited Commercial Emergency Equipment in Winnipeg and found a pumper truck that seats five and meets the necessary criteria to replace CNCLFD’s ten-year-old first line pumper for just over \$700 thousand, rather than the \$1,200 thousand for the unit suggested by the Fire Chief. Despite the size of the reserve fund, the latter is beyond the budget available. Given the procurement policy in place, a tender process will be necessary prior to the decision.

Manufacturers are available on the procurement site Canoe, and there are several Manitoba manufacturers. An important consideration is that besides the need to prepare for the next replacement in ten years, there is a possibility that if, for example, Sandhills builds their planned three-story hotel, CNCLFD will have to acquire a ladder truck. There is always a chance that some failure will require a purchase of another piece of apparatus. Chief McCallum will be invited to the January meeting to discuss the impending purchase and help decide the best value.

## **Reports:**

The Manager of Joint Services reports that detail improvements are being made to the CPCC. The steps at the Community Hall will be painted with bright yellow lines to improve visibility and avoid tripping. A seamstress is sought to do repairs to the stage curtains. At the Drop-In, an overhead shelf is proposed, to hold lighter items presently taking up floor space. The library's front steps, ramp and entrance are still under discussion. Local contractors will be contacted for ideas and quotes. Apparently, there is already an exterior water supply line in place that was covered over. Pipe and tap will be replaced. The Handivan's new door will have a remote control when the supplier is next out. The old door wasn't taken by the installers; it will be offered for sale "as is." Some repairs to the ceiling damaged by the old door are needed. The Fire Chief suggested that the other door of the same specification be replaced as well, budget permitting. At the Transfer Station, new signage is being developed with Carberry Signs. The security camera has been repositioned to capture licence plates. It will need hydro; the solar collector isn't strong enough. The MJS has attended an info session on Canada Summer Jobs in order to have applications in before the Dec 11 deadline. He has successfully completed his Refrigeration Operator Level 1 certification.

The HAC is worried that with no EDO on the committee there may not be enough voting members available for any given meeting. They would like to add members both voting and non-voting and invite councilors to become their Facebook friends to keep up to date.

The Fire Department is preparing for the Firemen's Ball fundraiser on December 6. The new #107 will spend the winter hauling the ATV/Special Rescue trailer, and in spring change to a quick response unit to vehicle fires and wildland fires. A student from Acadia School won the home fire escape plan contest and will receive their award this month. 6 members will attend a vehicle extrication seminar, and a level 1 firefighter course starts on December 8. Improvements in the SCBA cleaning and drying equipment will be followed by a dedicated three-bay sink, and the rebuild of a donated filler unit.

The librarian reports that their usual weekly and monthly programs are carrying on into December. Names are wanted to form a new book club. They plan to hold a technology course for seniors for five weeks in February and March. Participants can pre-register with Deb at Service for Seniors.

Cypress Planning District has issued 156 permits, the busiest year since 2016.

The cemetery has awarded the tender for the 2026 flowers to Harold Tolton. The plaque for Muriel McPhail will be refurbished, and a plaque has been ordered for the Harburn donation. A report on the year's improvements is being prepared for the Hardies through the CACF.

**Around the Table:**

Councilor Van Kommer professed himself "gobsmacked" by the size and quality of the 'Parade of Lights' and Christmas Kickoff that Tyson Boychuk and his fellow committee members (Laurie MacNevin and Brianna Renwick) coordinated. He congratulated them and called it a matter of pride for the whole community.

Councilor Rea reported that the Western Manitoba Regional Library has settled with their union.

Councilor Kalinowich, who had been on hot dog duty at the Christmas Kickoff Party on Saturday night, wanted to thank and congratulate whoever supplied the fine dry firewood that served to keep the revelers warm.

Councilor Olmstead advised that the Chamber of Commerce Awards nominations are now open. She also reminded that the Firemen's Ball is coming up on the sixth, and only a few tickets remain to be sold.

Mayor Muirhead felt he should speak on behalf of the Town of the sadness felt that the office of North Cypress-Langford was considering leaving the town. The association between the two municipalities goes back far into the twentieth century. He asked if Town representatives might attend the meeting planned in Brookdale. He was assured that the Municipality had no intention of leaving the building empty and were seeking a suitable tenant.

Manager of Joint Services Syrik expressed his pleasure at meeting with the councilors and CAOs as he settles into his role.

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