

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2025, 7:00 P.M.
CARSTAIRS MUNICIPAL OFFICE**

ATTENDEES: Mayor Colby; Councilors Allan, Ball, Fricke, Ratz, & Wilcox; Director of Planning & Development Kirk Willisroft; CAO Rick Blair, & Executive Assistant Kayleigh Van Es

ABSENT: Councilor Roberts

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Colby called the meeting of Monday, June 9, 2025, to order at 7:00 p.m.

ADDED ITEMS: Nil

ADOPTION OF AGENDA:
Motion 185/25 Motion by Councilor Wilcox to adopt the Regular Council agenda of June 9, 2025, as presented.

CARRIED

ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:
Motion 186/25 Motion by Councilor Allan to adopt the Regular Council Meeting minutes of May 26, 2025, as presented.

CARRIED

**BUSINESS ARISING FROM
PREVIOUS MEETING:**

1. Regional Policing Study Discussions

CAO Blair requested feedback on the latest draft of the Policing Study. Questions were raised by stakeholder municipalities, including whether MNP would be presenting directly to their Councils. The Final Draft is ready for submission. Each municipality is expected to use the data provided in the study to make informed policing decisions for the next 25 years. Other municipalities can bring the study to their Councils for feedback. If there is interest in a regional model, meetings can be arranged following those discussions. If no regional approach is supported, Carstairs will need to make a decision regarding its own detachment.



Councilor Ball inquired about the timeline for moving forward. CAO Blair noted that coordinating multiple stakeholders is challenging. He suggested a final stakeholder meeting to address outstanding questions and to ensure administration is well versed to answer any questions.

Councilor Fricke commented on interesting data points, particularly how smaller populations show high crime density, with criminal activity concentrated among younger demographics. She mentioned the possibility of municipalities considering deferring to 2032 in line with the federal model. She noted that the Didsbury detachment is not expecting any new officers in the next five years. She also emphasized the importance of using population numbers recognized by the province and raised concern that Didsbury Council may not have been involved in the process. In response, CAO Blair clarified that once a municipality reaches a population of 5,000, it is required to establish a detachment within two years. He also confirmed that Didsbury Council had been involved in the process.

Councilor Ratz expressed support for the stakeholder involvement and questioned how differing opinions would affect Carstairs' decision. CAO Blair responded that if a regional model is not broadly supported, decisions will still be made based on feedback and each municipality's needs.

Councilor Wilcox asked about feedback from other municipalities and whether there were comments about their preferred outcomes. She also asked whether the feedback was intended to change the study or just inform the process. CAO Blair clarified that all parties have had the opportunity to provide input and that the intent is to collect feedback, not make changes, and that the process could go back and forth indefinitely if not kept on track.

Mayor Colby stated there has been a great deal of communication around this and emphasized the importance of 24-hour policing. He expressed hope that one or two municipalities would partner with Carstairs to share costs, noting that most of the expense currently falls on Carstairs. He stressed the need to make a decision soon.



Motion 187/25

Motion by Councilor Ratz to accept Regional Policing Study Discussions as information.

CARRIED**DELEGATIONS:**

Nil

BYLAWS & POLICIES:

Nil

NEW BUSINESS:**1. Provincial Sports Award Presentation**

Council presented Provincial Sports Awards to local students and coaches who competed at the provincial level in their respective sports for the 2024–2025 season. A total of 59 individuals were recognized for their achievements.

2. Richard Dais Scholarship 2025

Council agreed to grant one anonymous student \$600 for their essay submission for the 2025 Richard Dias Scholarship.

Motion 188/25

Motion by Councilor Allan to recommend anonymous essay number seven as the winning submission for the 2025 Richard Dais Scholarship.

CARRIED**3. Citizenship Award 2025**

Council agreed to grant three anonymous students \$100 each for their essay submissions for the 2025 Citizenship Awards.

Motion 189/25

Motion by Councilor Fricke to recommended anonymous essay numbers two, four, and six as the winning submissions for the 2025 Citizenship Awards.

CARRIED**COMMITTEE REPORTS:****1. Policies & Priorities Committee**

- Next meeting June 12, 2025.

2. Mountain View Regional Waste Commission

- Next meeting July 2025.

3. Mountain View Regional Water Commission

- Next meeting June 10, 2025.

4. Mountain View Seniors' Housing

- MVSH celebrated their 65th anniversary of being in operation. Next Board meeting June 19, 2025.

Motion 190/25

Motion by Councilor Ball to accept all Committee Reports as information.

CARRIED**COUNCILOR REPORTS:****Councilor Allan**

- May 28-June 2, 2025, attended the FCM Conference in Ottawa. Enjoyed conversations with the Minister of Economic Development and visited the trade show, where I learned about various grants that we may qualify for.
- June 9, 2025, prior to Council attended the Provincial Sports award Ceremony.

Councilor Ball

- June 1, 2025, attended the Carstairs Heritage Festival, and noted a great turnout.

Councilor Fricke

- May 28-June 2, 2025, attended FCM Conference in Ottawa and participated in 23 workshops over the course of the event. I made a point to speak with representatives from each province and territory, and the number one issue common to all was aging infrastructure. The sessions covered a wide range of topics focused on current and future challenges facing municipalities across Canada. A session on misinformation and disinformation outlined the differences between the two and emphasized how these challenges can strain smaller municipalities and endanger staff. Another session reviewed the 2025 federal election and outlined federal priorities such as economic growth, infrastructure investment, housing affordability, and rural support. The Green Municipal Fund session introduced potential grant opportunities for tree planting and public building upgrades. A housing growth workshop suggested five strategies for unlocking development but failed to address municipalities' financial constraints and the ongoing downloading of responsibilities from provincial governments. Proposed federal actions like lowering property values were flagged as potentially triggering a crisis similar to the Great Depression, while high costs prevent CMHC from funding affordable housing projects in key regions. Rural challenges were also a focus, with rural municipalities managing 36% of Canada's infrastructure despite housing only 15% of the population.

These areas face aging infrastructure, poor connectivity, and rising crime, while funding is often inaccessible due to inconsistent definitions of “rural.” This is despite rural areas contributing 25% of the national GDP. Other sessions addressed women in politics, infrastructure delivery, and Canada–U.S. municipal collaboration, marking the first time a U.S. representative attended FCM. Additional highlights included attending the Prairies & Territories Caucus, making vendor connections at the trade show, and hearing from all federal political parties. A sobering takeaway from those discussions was the projection that nearly half of Canadians could face homelessness by 2030 if current trends continue.

- May 29, 2025, attended Parliament to observe proceedings, followed by a tour and a meeting with our MP for Yellowhead Riding, William Stevenson.
- June 6, 2025, attended Mountain View Lodge in Olds as Vice Chair for MVSH to celebrate the 65th Anniversary Senior’s week event.
- June 6, 2025, met with MVSH CAO Stacey Stilling and Board Chair Dwayne Fulton to discuss seniors housing.
- June 6, 2025, attended the Central Alberta Female Municipal Network gathering in Sundre. Presentations included Sundre’s Water and Wastewater Supervisor highlighting innovative infrastructure, including daily river releases and a new electro-fluctuation treatment process that cleans water in one hour. A Communications Specialist also presented on public speaking, conflict resolution, and government communication strategies.
- June 9, 2025, prior to Council attended the Provincial Sports award Ceremony.

Councilor Ratz

- May 31-June 2, 2025, volunteered for the Carstairs Heritage Festival, including assistance with the Scotch pairing event on Friday night. The parade was successful, featuring 10 pipe bands. The Highland Dance competition was held at the curling rink, with various activities taking place around the venue. It is estimated that between 2,000 and 3,000 people attended the festival events. Appreciation is extended to the Town and its employees, whose dedication made the event possible from setup through cleanup. The Carstairs Fire Department won the tug-of-war competition. A wind-up meeting will be scheduled in the coming weeks and will provide a report on the festival’s success at an upcoming Council meeting.
- June 9, 2025, prior to Council attended the Provincial Sports award Ceremony.

Councilor Roberts

- Absent

Councilor Wilcox

- May 28-June 2, 2025, attended FCM Conference in Ottawa, participated in a variety of sessions, seminars, and activities. Beginning with a visit to the local Indigenous market and delegate registration. A session on misinformation and disinformation emphasized the dangers these pose to municipalities and recommended responding with clear processes and codes of conduct. It was noted that tying information directly to projects and explaining their relevance can be an effective communication strategy. Participated in a roundtable exercise focused on communication strategies, particularly for social media engagement. Attended the Regional Caucus Meeting for the Prairies and Territories, aimed at informing FCM’s strategic planning. The Green Municipal Fund session highlighted funding opportunities for retrofitting arenas and community halls. Keynote speaker Chief Cindy Woodhouse emphasized the hope for future collaboration between Indigenous and municipal governments. A plenary session with the Mayors of New Orleans and Detroit offered valuable insight into the impact of tariffs, especially on tourism in the U.S., and marked a growing collaboration between FCM and the U.S. Conference of Mayors—surprising to learn such partnerships had not been previously established. Prime Minister Carney addressed the importance of strong federal-municipal relationships. Also attended the trade show and a study tour of the Byward Market’s integrated service response. The area, once a thriving marketplace, now houses multiple safe injection sites and large shelters, which has contributed to increased crime and the decline of small businesses. Ottawa’s shelter system has shifted focus from asylum-seeking populations to addressing complex challenges like drug abuse and mental health. Attended a session on strategies to increase housing stock, where it was noted that some municipalities

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face months-long permit delays. In contrast, Carstairs is fortunate to have a streamlined process. A tour of the Parliament building with MP William Stevenson included a visit to the Books of Remembrance. It was noted that each day a page is turned so every fallen soldier's name sees the light of day annually—a moving experience. Keynote speakers included E. May (Green Party), M. Lantsman (Conservative Party), M. Carney (Liberal Party), and G. Johns (NDP). Attended the Indigenous–Municipal Relations Sacred Fire event, which focused more on existing FCM programs and the Indigenous liaison position. Also attended a session on empowering women in local government. The overarching takeaway from the conference was that Canada is facing a crisis, particularly around tariffs and their impact on economic independence. There is hope for better inclusion of rural communities, though the definition of “rural” varies widely.

- June 2, 2025, co-hosted a Seniors Brunch and Expo with FCSS and Carstairs Recreation, serving over 200 seniors in the community.
- June 9, 2025, prior to Council attended the Provincial Sports award Ceremony.

Mayor Colby

- May 28-June 2, 2025, attended FCM Conference in Ottawa, attending sessions that focused on managing misinformation and disinformation in communities, particularly on social media platforms. Participated in a storm water management tour showcasing a 5-hectare site that took 15 years to complete. A session on transit infrastructure highlighted the need for investment in education to develop homegrown technical expertise. Also attended a session on revamping municipal procurement processes for greater cost-effectiveness. The Prairies and Territories Caucus and Green Fund exhibition presented potential opportunities, including support for water system efficiency planning. During the Parliament tour with MP William Stevenson, noted several relatable challenges shared by municipalities of all sizes. Prime Minister Carney's remarks focused heavily on housing, particularly the promotion of row and modular housing, which is encouraging rural migration. Raised the broader question of how towns like Carstairs define and deliver affordable housing within their own communities.
- June 9, 2025, prior to Council attended the Provincial Sports award Ceremony.

Councilor Ball inquired whether there were any discussions regarding slowing immigration. Councilor Fricke responded that no such discussions had taken place.

Motion 191/25

Motion by Councilor Wilcox to accept all Councilor Reports as information.

CARRIED

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Mountain View Seniors Housing Foundation Golf Classic Sponsorship

Council reviewed the sponsorship package. The tournament will be hosted in Carstairs again.

Councilor Fricke noted the decrease in price for Team sponsorship.

Motion 192/25

Motion by Councilor Ratz to direct administration to facilitate a Team sponsorship for the Mountain View Seniors Housing Foundation's 15th Annual Golf Classic in 2025.

CARRIED

Motion 193/25

2. MCPL Richard Curnow Memorial Scholarship Request

Motion by Councilor Wilcox to accept MCPL Richard Curnow Memorial Scholarship request as information.

CARRIED

3. STARS Thank you

Council reviewed the thank-you note from STARS.

Motion 194/25

Motion by Councilor Ball to accept the thank-you note from STARS as information.

CARRIED

4. HSSEF Golf Sponsorship Request

Jenn Massop, President of the Hugh Sutherland School Enhancement Foundation (HSSEF), presented a request to Council. She explained that the HSSEF is committed to enhancing the educational experience of students by improving resources,



programs, and facilities. The upcoming golf tournament is a key initiative aimed at raising funds to support these efforts and positively impact the school community.

Councilors Allan, Ball, and Ratz had no questions and expressed general support for reviewing the request.

Councilor Wilcox asked whether the funds were tied to a specific project. Ms. Massop clarified that the funds would support a broader scope and are not affiliated with any other HSS fundraising initiative.

Councilor Fricke asked about the primary focus of the fundraiser. Ms. Massop stated that the Foundation's goal is to raise funds for a new accessible playground at Hugh Sutherland School.

Mayor Colby inquired about the fundraising target for the tournament. Ms. Massop shared that they are aiming to raise \$30,000.

Councilor Allan recommended that Ms. Massop connect with CES for information on their recent playground fundraising efforts.

Ms. Massop noted that the Foundation has engaged a grant writer and is hopeful for matching grant opportunities to support the playground project.

Mayor Colby concluded by stating that the request could be further discussed at the upcoming Policies & Priorities Committee meeting this Thursday.

Motion 195/25

Motion by Councilor Fricke to accept HSSEF Golf Sponsorship request as information.

CARRIED

CAO'S REPORT:

- May 28-June 2, 2025, attended FCM Conference in Ottawa, the event included a number of informative discussions and seminars, with opportunities to connect with fellow CAOs and exchange insights on common challenges and best practices across municipalities. It was valuable to see how other municipalities operate. Unfortunately, CAO Blair became ill after the trip.
- Informed Council that the Town's grader is in need of repair and that it would be more cost-effective to replace the unit than to proceed with repairs. A formal request to access funds from the Stabilization Reserve will be brought forward at a future meeting. Councilor Fricke suggested exploring equipment options through Enterprise. Councilor Wilcox inquired about annual usage hours for the grader. CAO Blair responded that usage varies depending on the winter season but noted the current unit, a 2004 model, has logged over 9,000 hours. It remains a critical asset in maintaining the Town's service standards. Administration is currently looking into a used replacement unit that has undergone regular maintenance.

Motion 196/25

Motion by Councilor Allan to accept CAO's Report as information.

CARRIED

COUNCILOR COMMENTS:

1. **Councilor Wilcox**
Expressed acknowledgement to Carstairs FCSS and the Carstairs Recreation program coordinators for their contributions. They are recognized as a valuable asset to the community.
2. **Councilor Ball,**
Commented on the paving work completed on Highway 580, noting that the job was well done.
3. **Mayor Colby**
Congratulated Councilor Ratz on the success of the Carstairs Heritage Festival, attributing the achievements to the efforts of dedicated volunteers.

Motion 197/25

Motion by Councilor Fricke to accept Councilor Comments as information.

CARRIED

PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD:

1. Rose Warden

Requested that Council consider installing "End Playground Zone" signs throughout town. Also expressed appreciation to Council for their dedicated efforts in serving and pleasing the residents of Carstairs.



Motion 198/25 Motion by Councilor Wilcox to accept Public Question period as information.
CARRIED

MEDIA QUESTION PERIOD: Nil

CLOSED MEETING: *Section 107 of the MGA states that Councils and Council Committees must conduct their meetings in public unless the matter to be discussed is within one of the exceptions to disclosure in Division 2 of Part 1 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) (s. 16 to 20).*

Motion 199/25 Motion by Councilor Wilcox that Council close the meeting to the public to discuss Third-Party Business Interests as per Section 16 of FOIP at 8:09 p.m.
CARRIED


Motion 200/25 Motion by Councilor Wilcox to come out of the closed meeting session at 8:57 p.m.
CARRIED

NEXT MEETING: Monday, June 23, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:
Motion 201/25 Motion by Councilor Ball to adjourn the meeting of June 9, 2025, at 8:58 p.m.
CARRIED



Lance Colby, Mayor



Rick Blair, CAO