

**MINUTES OF THE POLICIES & PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2026, 1:00 P.M.
CARSTAIRS MUNICIPAL OFFICE**

IN ATTENDANCE: Mayor Allan, Councilors Ball, Fricke, Tolley, Roberts, Selanders & Wilcox; Director of Corporate Services Shannon Allison; Director of Operations Corriena Fox; Library Manager M. Ginther; Director of Community Services Paula Schmick-Roy; Manager of Legislative Services Jessica Pryde; Director of Planning & Development & Deputy CAO Kirk Williscroft; & Executive Assistant Kayleigh Van Es

ABSENT: Nil

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Allan called the Policies & Priorities Committee meeting of Tuesday, September 15, 2026, to order at 1:00 p.m.

ADDED ITEMS: Nil

ADOPTION OF AGENDA: Motion by Councilor Wilcox to adopt the Policies & Priorities Committee meeting agenda of September 15, 2026, as presented.

CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES: Motion by Councilor Ball to adopt the Policies & Priorities Committee minutes of May 19, 2026, as presented.

CARRIED

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: **1. Library Space Needs Assessment**
M. Ginther provided the Committee with an update on the Library Space Needs Assessment. The assessment provides information on projected library space requirements based on continued community growth and provides information to support future planning and best practices. M. Ginther advised that the Library is currently making its existing space work; however, additional space is becoming a pressing need to better address community needs and meet best practices. The assessment also considers opportunities to increase programming, accommodate circulated materials, and provide additional meeting rooms, which are currently difficult to schedule. The assessment is intended to serve as an aspirational document to support long-term planning.

Councilor Fricke thanked M. Ginther for the work completed and asked whether the collection material and item count included duplicate items. M. Ginther advised that duplicate items are counted as a single item; however, the Library currently does not retain many duplicate items due to space constraints. Councilor Fricke asked whether the Parkland Library Board provides the computers and software for the Library. M. Ginther advised that the Parkland Library Board provides the computers and software, while the Library provides the monitors, keyboards and mice, as well as additional software. Councilor Fricke asked whether there were design concepts that would allow for future additions to the Library. M. Ginther advised that there were no specific concepts to identify at this time and noted that Edmonton uses a storefront model as one example.

Councilor Selanders noted the projected requirement of approximately 26,000 sq. ft. by 2051 and asked for context to better understand the size. M. Ginther offered perspective that the new Airdrie Library is 53,000 sq. ft. and advised that the projected space would include meeting rooms and community spaces to meet community needs.

Councilor Ball had no questions and thanked M. Ginther for the information, noting

Councilor Roberts echoed the comments and advised that they had also conducted research on the matter.

Councilor Tolley asked about the storage of donated books. M. Ginther advised that the Friends of the Library have a Sea-Can for storage, as the Library does not have sufficient space for donated materials.

Councilor Wilcox thanked M. Ginther and noted the importance of keeping the Library's future space needs in mind during long-term planning. Councilor Wilcox also noted the need for additional programming space and meeting rooms and asked whether the calculations in the assessment were inclusive of all space requirements. M. Ginther confirmed that they were.

Mayor Allan thanked M. Ginther for the detailed information.

Motion by Councilor Tolley to accept the Library Space Needs Assessment as information.

CARRIED

BYLAW & POLICIES:

1. Policy No. 41-006-26 Water Meter Testing Policy

C. Fox spoke to the Policy. The Policy establishes a process for how the Town receives, reviews and addresses concerns raised by ratepayers regarding water meter accuracy or abnormal readings.

Councilor Wilcox questioned Section 3(b) and asked whether Operations would explain the meter concerns and findings to the residents. C. Fox confirmed that Operations would investigate the matter thoroughly, including checking for leaks, and advised that the process outlined in the Policy would be considered a last step. C. Fox noted the importance of ensuring residents understand the likelihood and circumstances under which the process would apply.

Councilor Tolley asked whether the Town would cover the \$850 cost if the meter was determined to be inaccurate. C. Fox confirmed that it would.

Councilor Selanders asked about the acknowledgement of the \$850 payment. C. Fox advised that a letter and signage would be provided and that the meter change-out would be signed off once completed.

Councilor Fricke thanked C. Fox for the work on the Policy and referenced discussions at Alberta Municipalities regarding Olds experiencing increased pushback related to meter installations. C. Fox noted that 1,022 meters have been installed in Carstairs and that Olds is using a meter contractor for installations, while Carstairs completes installations in-house. C. Fox advised that installations take approximately 10–15 minutes and that approximately half of the meter installations have been completed, with approximately 1,100 remaining.

Councilor Wilcox asked about compliance in Carstairs compared to Olds and whether the Town has experienced similar concerns. C. Fox advised that the Town has encountered residents who are less engaged but has not experienced the same level of conflict. C. Fox stated that the Town has the supporting research, printouts and educational information available.

The Committee was provided an opportunity to view the water meter program and its features.

Motion by Councilor Ball to accept Policy No. 41-006-26 Water Meter Testing Policy as presented and forward to the next Council meeting for ratification.

CARRIED

2. Policy No. 12-050-26 Reserves and Accumulated Surplus Policy

S. Allison spoke to the Policy. The Policy was previously brought forward to the Committee in April. Changes have been made regarding reporting to reference the budgeting and planning process, and an optimal balance has also been added.

Councilor Fricke requested clarification regarding the definition of unrestricted surplus.

Councilor Selanders asked what type of reserve would be used for Library funding. S. Allison advised that a Specific Purpose Reserve would be established. S. Allison explained that the Policy provides direction for future reporting and will allow reserve balances to be identified within the financial reporting. Councilor Selanders also asked for clarification regarding interest-bearing reserves.

Councilor Wilcox questioned Section 6(b) and asked whether the storage of information and reports would be accessible to the public. S. Allison advised that information available to the public would align with the applicable financial reporting requirements and that the Policy establishes the budgeting process for the receipt and disbursement of reserve funds.

Motion by Councillor Fricke to accept Policy No. 12-050-26 Reserves and Accumulated Surplus Policy as amended and forward to the next Council meeting for ratification.

CARRIED

3. Ice Allocation Policy

P. Schmick-Roy spoke to the current Ice Allocation Standard Operating Procedure. The primary users are local and non-profit youth organizations, followed by secondary and tertiary users based on the percentage of participants, with quaternary use allocated to public skating programs. She advised that there is limited ice availability and that historical records are maintained, including information regarding returned ice. Ice allocations are evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Prime-time ice is available Monday to Friday from 3:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and throughout the day on weekends. Public skating is offered free of charge for approximately five hours per week, including one hour on weekends. Non-prime ice is available before 3:30 p.m. and after 10:00 p.m. Schools make significant use of non-prime ice. The annual ice allocation deadline is June 30, with allocations coordinated around the ice schedule. Tournament and special event requests are also considered. A 21-day cancellation policy is in place to allow cancelled ice to be reallocated.

Councilor Fricke referenced ice allocation policies in Canmore, Devon, Beaumont, Banff, Airdrie, Lloydminster and Camrose and noted that municipalities are given priority in some of these policies. Councilor Fricke questioned whether an all-encompassing policy should be developed.

CAO R. Blair advised that Council could consider bringing the matter forward as a formal policy, while Operations would continue to manage the day-to-day allocation process. CAO R. Blair noted that some municipalities have more than one ice surface and explained that formal Council policies can create accountability and potential liability if circumstances require deviations from the policy. For this reason, the current process is managed as a departmental

Councilor Fricke suggested that an overarching policy could address potential conflicts and asked whether a briefing note could outline what has historically been done compared to potential implementation of a formal policy.

CAO R. Blair advised that an overarching policy could be considered to provide direction where conflicts arise.

Councilor Tolley asked whether the 21-day cancellation period applied this year. P. Schmick-Roy confirmed that it did and advised that if another user is found, the original cancelled ice time would not be reinstated if the original user is unable to use the ice.

Councilor Tolley asked whether tertiary user groups are reviewed annually. P. Schmick-Roy advised that the groups are reviewed and added to the list as appropriate. Tertiary users cannot pre-book ice.

Motion by Councilor Wilcox to accept Ice Allocation SOP as information

CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Briefing Notes-AB Munis

J. Pryde provided the Committee with briefing notes for the upcoming Alberta Municipalities conference. The following resolutions were reviewed:

Balancing Incentives Between Locum and Community-Based Physicians & Other Healthcare Workers to Support Family Practice – Administration supports this resolution.

Further Strengthening Governance and Funding Models for Seniors' Lodge Accommodations – Administration supports this resolution.

Derelict Non-Residential Tax Subclass – Administration makes no recommendation.

Modernization of Municipal Investment Authorities Under the Municipal Investment Regulation – Administration supports this resolution.

Provincial Alternative Revenue Optimization Program to Support Productivity, Workforce Readiness, and Industrial Competitiveness – Administration supports this resolution.

Budget Surplus and Municipal Infrastructure Investment – Administration supports this resolution.

Broadening Scope of Off-Site Levies – Administration supports this resolution.

Councilor Selanders asked whether, from the Town's perspective, the current approach could impact growth. CAO R. Blair advised that municipalities need to continue gathering information and providing actual numbers to ensure long-term accuracy, while advocating for different approaches in the community and considering the use of off-site levies.

Expanded Grant Eligibility for Water Infrastructure – Administration supports this resolution.

Limiting the Use of Fresh Water in Hydraulic Fracturing – Administration makes no

Police Fines and Penalties Revenue Sharing – Administration supports this resolution.

Regulation of Personal Micromobility Devices (i.e. e-scooters) through the Alberta Traffic Safety Act – Administration supports this resolution.

Family Support for Children with Disabilities Transparency and Timely Access – Administration supports this resolution.

Alignment of Municipal Fiscal Year with Provincial and Federal Budget Cycles – Administration supports this resolution.

Strengthening Auditor Reporting of Financial Irregularities in Municipal Financial Statements – Administration supports this resolution.

Door-to-Door Solar Sales – Administration supports this resolution.

Restoring Provincial Support for Perpetual Conservation Easements – Administration supports this resolution.

Remediation of Contaminated Properties – Administration supports this resolution.

Equitable Provincial Charitable Gaming Model – Administration supports this resolution.

Strengthening Alberta Municipalities' Voice to the Province by Increasing the Resolution Voting Threshold – Administration makes no recommendation.

Investing in Prevention: Strengthening FCSS and Community Well-Being – Administration supports this resolution.

Motion by Councilor Wilcox to accept the Alberta Municipalities Briefing Notes as information.

CARRIED

2. Ice Scheduling and Facility Maintenance System Review

P. Schmick-Roy spoke to the current Univerus program. The software costs approximately \$8,800 and provides programming that connects to the Town's website, allowing users to view available ice and meeting room bookings. Payments can be made online or processed by staff. P. Schmick-Roy advised that Administration is reviewing other programs that may work more effectively from a financial and administrative perspective.

Councilor Selanders asked whether changing the ice scheduling program would affect program registration. P. Schmick-Roy confirmed that it would.

P. Schmick-Roy advised that a new software system could provide a more user-friendly experience, including online payments. Finley Sport was identified as another potential program. The cost is anticipated to be approximately the same, with no limit on programs or available slots. No additional hardware or software would be required, and training is included. Implementation would take a couple of months and would involve a parallel transition period.

Councilor Wilcox asked whether other departments would be able to use the registration system and whether waivers would be stored within the system. P.

Schmick-Roy confirmed that the new program would provide these capabilities.

Councilor Tolley welcomed the possibility of a change to a more user-friendly system and noted the importance of completing due diligence.

Councilor Wilcox asked about the previous registration process and whether it had been paper-based. Discussion included challenges with the back end of the Univerus system and working with auditors.

Motion by Councilor Tolley to accept the Ice Scheduling and Facility Maintenance System Review as information.

CARRIED

3. LiveBarn Feasibility and Cost Report

CAO R. Blair spoke to the challenges associated with internet service and advised that LiveBarn is not compatible with Starlink and would require fibre. The cost for fibre installation is estimated at \$50,000 or more, with ongoing internet costs of approximately \$700–\$900 per month. There is no cost to install LiveBarn.

Councilor Fricke asked how privacy concerns are addressed with the system.

Councilor Selanders asked whether the system can be turned on and off. It was confirmed that the system can be turned on and off.

Councilor Tolley stated that the system captures voices, which could be a concern.

Councilor Fricke asked whether there are other Town facilities that require a fibre upgrade and whether a discount could be negotiated.

The Committee discussed looking into other options that may be available.

Councilor Tolley asked whether Administration had approached any user groups regarding sharing the costs. CAO R. Blair advised that this had not yet been done and that Administration could conduct further due diligence and investigate the available options.

Councilor Fricke asked whether there was a way to determine the level of interest in the service and to conduct a cost analysis.

Councilor Ball noted that the cost is related to the required upload speed.

Motion by Councilor Ball to accept LiveBarn Feasibility and Cost Report as information.

CARRIED

REPORTS:

1. Development Reports

The Committee reviewed the Development Reports. To date, 148 permits have been issued, including 45 new home building permits and 57 compliance certificates.

2. City-Wide Monthly Reports

The Committee reviewed the following City-Wide Monthly reports.

- a. Fire Reports
- b. Bylaw Reports

3. Quarterly Facility Utilization Reports

The Committee reviewed the following Utilization reports.

- a. Carstairs Memorial Arena
- b. Carstairs Community Hall
- c. Carstairs Campground
- d. Parks & Sports Fields
- e. Schools Academy & Programs

Motion by Councilor Selanders to accept the all Reports as information.

CARRIED

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Letter-ATV/OHV

The Committee reviewed the letter requesting ATV/OHV use in Town. The Committee agreed not to pursue this avenue at this time.

Motion by Councilor Wilcox to accept the Letter-ATV/OHV as information.

CARRIED

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Nil

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, October 20, 2026

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Councilor Wilcox to adjourn the Policies & Priorities Committee meeting of Tuesday, September 15, 2026, at 3:13 p.m.

CARRIED

Dean Allan, Mayor

Rick Blair, CAO