



Meeting with Premier Greg Selinger and Members of the
Provincial Cabinet

November 26, 2014

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Introduction

- ❖ The AMM is pleased to host our annual meeting with the Provincial Cabinet to share municipal priorities, and continue a dialogue with the provincial government about the future of Manitoba.
- ❖ We also hope to meet with every Minister again in the New Year to discuss new and ongoing issues in greater detail with each department.
- ❖ This year the AMM is pleased to welcome new and re-elected municipal officials to our 16th Annual Convention.
- ❖ New and re-elected municipal officials will face a number of challenges in their next term, but they will also be able to create positive opportunities and shape their communities.
- ❖ In this document, the AMM has outlined our main lobbying priorities in three categories: Successes in 2013, Critical Issues requiring action, and Important Issues that have seen some progress, but are not yet resolved.

SUCSESSES IN 2013

✓ Building Canada 2014 – Small Communities Fund

○ Manitoba Municipal Government

- ❖ *The AMM would like to thank the Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Secretariat for providing updated information regarding the New Building Canada Fund to our members in a clear and timely manner.*
- ❖ *The AMM was also pleased to participate as a member of the local consultative committee that reviewed applications for the Small Communities Fund.*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Ensure municipalities receive a fair share of the New Building Canada Fund in consultation with the AMM.*

✓ Manitoba RCMP Contract Management Committee

○ Manitoba Justice

- ❖ *The AMM is pleased with the ongoing work of the Contract Management Committee, which continues to rely on support from Manitoba Justice.*
- ❖ *MPSA municipalities are developing an improved understanding of policing services in their communities, and the AMM hopes this improved understanding can be expanded to municipalities with other policing arrangements as well.*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue to work with municipalities to ensure adequate funding is available and provided to municipalities to assist with policing costs, including, but not limited to police overtime costs.*

✓ **Top-up Funding to Municipal Infrastructure Programs**

○ **Manitoba Municipal Government**

- ❖ *The AMM appreciates the increased provincial funding for municipal infrastructure through programs such as the Municipal Roads Improvement Program, the Municipal Bridge Program and the Manitoba Water Services Board.*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue to support these important programs, in addition to existing provincial programs which contribute to municipal infrastructure renewal;*
- ❖ *Streamline the approval and notification process to successful applicants to ensure they can take advantage of the construction season.*

✓ **Partner 4 Growth**

○ **Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development**

- ❖ *The AMM was pleased to participate again this year on the selection committee with double the amount of funding from 2013 to award to applicants.*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue to support this successful program to allow regions more chances to identify and pursue economic development opportunities.*

✓ **Hometown Green Teams**

○ **Manitoba Children and Youth Opportunities**

- ❖ *The AMM was pleased with the funding increase for this program, allowing more summer positions for students and youth to be offered in communities across the province.*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue to support this successful program, which gives students valuable experience, and benefits the communities they are from.*

CRITICAL ISSUES – NEED ACTION

✓ Alternate Revenues

- **Manitoba Finance**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Identify new, additional sources of revenue for municipalities to address the infrastructure deficit and increasing municipal responsibilities.*

✓ Cell Service

- **Manitoba Jobs and the Economy**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue facilitating discussions with cell carriers and other stakeholders to explore options to expand cellular coverage and broadband access;*
- ❖ *Work with municipalities to develop solutions to ensure the safety of emergency responders and the public in Manitoba through reliable communications technology.*

✓ Economic Development Strategy

- **Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Develop a coordinated economic development strategy for all of Manitoba to ensure good value is generated from investments in each region.*

✓ **Community Places Program**

○ **Manitoba Housing and Community Development**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Increase the maximum grant amount for all recipients, and the total funding available under this program;*
- ❖ *Reverse recent cuts to this program.*

✓ **Cosmetic Pesticide Ban**

○ **Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Implement measures to ensure the safe use of cosmetic pesticides without banning them, such as public education or restricting access to licenced applicators;*
- ❖ *Recognize and address the financial impact this pesticide ban will have on municipal weed control efforts and municipal budgets.*

✓ **Flood Mitigation**

○ **Manitoba Emergency Measures**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Invest in flood prevention and mitigation infrastructure and urge the federal government to develop the National Disaster Mitigation Program in coordination with municipalities;*
- ❖ *Implement improvements to existing flood forecasting, response and mitigation tools based on the 2011 flood review reports;*
- ❖ *Urge the federal government to review and improve Disaster Financial Assistance Policies;*
- ❖ *Recognize and address the economic impact of recent flooding.*

✓ Provincial Sales Tax Rebate for Municipalities

- **Manitoba Finance**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Exempt municipalities from paying PST or provide a rebate of all PST paid by municipalities.*

✓ Provincial Planning and Assessment Services Staff

- **Manitoba Municipal Government**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Fill vacancies in regional planning and assessment offices to ensure municipalities are receiving timely and accurate services from each of these branches.*

✓ Reduce Education Tax on Property

- **Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Provide new, sustainable long-term funding to cover 80 per cent of operating costs for education to reduce school division reliance on property taxes;*
- ❖ *Rescind the 5,000 cap on the Farmland School Tax Rebate;*
- ❖ *Fulfill election promises to eliminate school taxes on farmland and for seniors.*

✓ Reduce Community Capital Contributions for Health Facilities

- **Manitoba Health**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Fund all health facilities provincially or reduce the local contribution requirement from 10 per cent to a fixed 5 per cent of the project cost.*

IMPORTANT ISSUES – SOME PROGRESS, MORE ACTION NEEDED

✓ Affordable Housing Shortage

○ Manitoba Housing and Community Development

- ❖ *The AMM was pleased with the introduction of measures in Budgets 2013 and 2014, including commitments to build additional affordable housing units, a tax credit to support the construction of more rental housing, and the reorganization of rent assistance benefits.*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Partner with the AMM and other stakeholders to improve municipal knowledge about existing tools to assist them in increasing their local housing supply;*
- ❖ *Continue to hold Housing Advisory Roundtable meetings;*
- ❖ *Continue to support a federal role in housing.*

✓ Amalgamation Costs

○ Manitoba Municipal Government

The AMM appreciates the cooperation from Manitoba Municipal Government to work with the AMM and the Manitoba Municipal Administrators Association (MMAA) to identify all the potential challenges for amalgamating municipalities, as well as the funding recently provided by the government to assist with the areas of finance and accounting, and human resources.

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Commit to covering the hard costs resulting from municipal amalgamations, including but not limited to upgrades or conversions to municipal offices, administrative and financial services.*

✓ **By-Law Enforcement**

- **Manitoba Justice**
- **Manitoba Municipal Government**
- ❖ *The AMM would like to thank the Departments of Justice and Municipal Government for their involvement in developing a new approach to municipal by-law enforcement.*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue working with the AMM to develop regulations and provide support to municipalities in order to implement the new by-law enforcement process;*
- ❖ *Help to minimize implementation costs for municipalities to ensure by-law enforcement is a viable process for all communities.*

✓ **Green Manitoba**

- **Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue to use the WRARS levy revenue not rebated to municipalities to set up recycling and waste management programs for organic waste, and construction and demolition waste to divert more waste from landfills;*
- ❖ *Rebate the remaining WRARS levy revenue to municipalities once these waste management programs are operating.*

✓ **Handi-Transit**

- **Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation**
- **Manitoba Municipal Government**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Support regional and community-sponsored options for local handi-transit services;*
- ❖ *Support affordable and sustainable transit services for all residents, including those who must travel for medical reasons, and those with mobility issues.*

✓ **Health Practitioner Recruitment, Training and Retention**

- **Manitoba Health**
- ❖ *The AMM is pleased with the government's commitment to ensure all Manitobans have access to a family doctor by 2015, and the measures taken so far to implement the recruitment, training retention recommendations made by the Brandon Medical Education Study.*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue with the implementation of the Brandon Medical Education Study recommendations to ensure residents in rural and northern Manitoba have access to suitable primary care.*

✓ **Manitoba Hydro Office Closures**

- **Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Ensure response times to service calls are not affected by the closures of certain Manitoba Hydro rural offices;*
- ❖ *Minimize the negative impacts of these office closures to the communities affected.*

✓ **New Technical Advisory Committee to Improve Subdivision Review**

○ **Manitoba Municipal Government**

- ❖ *The AMM appreciates the cooperation from all departments involved to implement the streamlined subdivision review process for rural, single-lot subdivisions.*
- ❖ *The work of the second joint Technical Advisory Committee won a Manitoba Service Excellence Award in 2014, in the category of Partnership.*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue to work towards streamlining other aspects of the subdivision review process identified by the AMM.*

✓ **Northern Development Strategy**

○ **Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs**

- ❖ *The AMM is pleased there is a second Northern Development Strategy underway due to the importance of the north in Manitoba's economy.*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue consulting with communities and northern municipal officials as the Province of Manitoba develops the Northern Development Strategy.*

✓ **Oil Production Issues**

○ **Manitoba Mineral Resources**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Support ongoing work by the oil industry and municipalities to jointly address future challenges;*
- ❖ *Commit to act on recommendations made by the Rural Municipality-Oil Industry Working Group to address infrastructure and resource use challenges in oil-producing and affected communities once the work is completed.*

✓ Palliative Care

- **Manitoba Health**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Ensure sufficient funding is provided for palliative care in every RHA to deliver good quality patient care, and avoid excessive reliance on community fundraising.*

✓ Police Escorts under The Mental Health Act

- **Manitoba Health**
- **Manitoba Justice**

- ❖ *While it is not the only reason for high overtime costs, the requirement for police escorts for Mental Health Act (MHA) patients contributes to a lack of police coverage in many rural areas and high overtime costs.*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue to improve timely access to care for MHA patients to free up police resources or provide an alternate option for escorting patients.*

✓ Problem Beaver Management

- **Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship**
- **Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development**

**Red in 2013

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Work with the AMM to ensure the existing programs to address infrastructure damage caused by beavers meet the needs of municipalities.*

✓ Protection for Elected Municipal Officials

- **Manitoba Municipal Government**

- ❖ *The AMM was pleased to work with Manitoba Municipal Government to develop and distribute a brochure for the public on how to participate in municipal governance.*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Work with the AMM to help improve municipal officials' understanding of their existing protections from civil liability, also known as qualified privilege.*

✓ Support for Recreation Centre Operating Costs

- **Manitoba Children and Youth Opportunities**
- **Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Support the development of a pilot project to increase the efficiency of older recreation centres through Manitoba Hydro.*

✓ Surface Water Management

- **Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship**
- **Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation**

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Apply new drainage regulation in consultation with municipalities;*
- ❖ *Provide sufficient funding to fulfill the Surface Water Management Strategy objectives, including increased support for Conservation Districts;*
- ❖ *Continue to provide support for ecological goods and services through various means, including Growing Forward 2;*
- ❖ *Address inter-jurisdiction flooding and drainage issues.*