



ASSOCIATION OF
MANITOBA
MUNICIPALITIES

**Meeting with the Honourable Cathy Cox
Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage**

2020

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Introduction

- The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Cathy Cox and representatives of Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage.
- The AMM encourages the Province of Manitoba to consider municipal concerns as well as the effects of funding decisions on local communities throughout the budget process.
- The *Speech from the Throne* (November 2019) highlighted the provincial government's commitment to work closely with municipal partners to provide efficient, cost-effective local government, in response to the AMM calling for a 'Partners in Growth' Memorandum of Understanding during the provincial election campaign. The AMM looks forward to working with the Province of Manitoba to strengthen provincial-municipal growth and partnership opportunities through a balanced discussion of both revenues and expenditures.
- This document outlines the AMM's position and recommendations on a number of important municipal issues relevant to the Sport, Culture and Heritage portfolio.

Priority Issues

1) Library Funding and Universal Access

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ ***Increase provincial funding to the Rural Library Operating Grant Program; and***
- ❖ ***Allow all library cards issued in Manitoba to be valid at any library that receives provincial funding.***

- The AMM was pleased to make formal submissions to the provincial government's review of libraries in December 2016 as well as its Cultural Review in May 2017, as many libraries across Manitoba continue to evolve into community hubs that foster community relations and partnerships.
- However, since 2004, the provincial contribution to the *Rural Library Operating Grant Program* has remained flat at a maximum of \$8.50 per capita.
- Due to this 16-year stagnation, local libraries are required to address financial shortfalls through increased municipal contributions to avoid cuts to library programming.
- Frozen provincial grant funding coupled with provincially mandated accessibility standards further contributes to the challenges local community libraries endure.
- The AMM strongly encourages the Province to immediately increase the maximum provincial grant amount to ensure libraries can keep their doors open in local communities.
- The AMM also welcomes the provincial government's commitment to sustain local libraries as centres of learning and community hubs as per the ministerial mandate letter, and thus would appreciate an update on this plan.
- Meanwhile, the AMM continues to support the implementation of a universal, province-wide library card system to increase efficiencies and facilitate library use.

2) Funding for Community Museums

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ ***Continue to work with community museums and local heritage foundations to ensure the Heritage Trust Program benefits local communities; and***
 - ❖ ***Provide an update on the new Heritage Resources Fund.***
- As provincial tourism reports consistently convey, visits to both museums and historic sites are frequent activities that visitors choose when planning their trip to Manitoba.
 - The AMM welcomes the first investments under the Heritage Trust Program in support of small and medium-sized museums, however, further increased investments in local community museums is vital to help promote tourism across the province.
 - The *Community Museum Grants Program* (CMGP) supports over 100 community museums while awarding maximum grant amounts of only \$1,350 and \$3,150, depending on the type of museum.
 - These amounts have remained stagnant since 1991, and thus many local community museums have increasingly become reliant on local fundraising and donations as their operating costs continue to increase.
 - Currently, 50 heritage organizations and 29 community foundations participate in the Manitoba Heritage Trust Program, which has resulted in more than \$1.7 million in permanent endowments. We urge the Province to work with community museums to ensure all areas of the province are eligible and have access to this Trust program.
 - Additionally, in June 2019, the Province committed \$15-million to establish the Heritage Resources Fund to help preserve Manitoba's heritage infrastructure. We would therefore appreciate receiving an update on the status of this new fund.
 - The AMM also welcomes the provincial government's recent increased investments in the tourism sector and urges the Province of Manitoba to provide additional financial support for facilities that serve to protect and interpret Manitoba's historical and heritage resources.

Appendix – AMM Active Resolutions

AMM Resolution #41-2018 *Standing Policy

Topic: Funding for Community Museums

Sponsor(s): RM of Alexander (Eastern District)

Department(s): Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage

WHEREAS at present, 110 museums receive funding from the Community Museum Grants Program (CMGP); and

WHEREAS 160 museums fit the CMGP institutional criteria and merit consideration of eligibility, but are currently excluded due to the limitation of the availability of funds to this program;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to reinvest in the Community Museum Grants Program (CMGP) by setting forth an inclusive, rather than exclusive, mandate for this program, thus opening it up to all eligible museums who meet the required operating and governance criteria; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the provincial government increase funding for community museums to reflect their importance to local communities.

AMM Resolution #47-2016 *Standing Policy

Topic: Library Funding

Sponsor(s): Municipality of Grandview (Parkland District)

Department(s): Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage

WHEREAS libraries provide valuable services to all Manitobans; and

WHEREAS libraries are faced with ever increasing costs to provide these services; and

WHEREAS the Rural Library Operating Grant matches municipal funding up to a maximum amount that hasn't been increased since 2004;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to increase the maximum funds available to libraries to reflect the increasing costs libraries have seen in the last 12 years and in the years ahead.

AMM Resolution #42-2012

Topic: Exempt Public Libraries from Education Levies and Taxes

Sponsor(s): Town of Stonewall (Interlake District), RM of Rockwood (Interlake District)

Department(s): Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage; Manitoba Municipal Relations

WHEREAS there are ninety-two public libraries in the Province of Manitoba formed under The Public Libraries Act and funded by the Province and member municipalities;

AND WHEREAS public library properties are subject to the other property provincial education support levy and the local school division education levy;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to amend The Municipal Assessment Act to exempt public library properties from provincial and local school division education levies and taxes.

AMM Resolution #15-2011

Topic: Increase per Capita Base Rate for Library Funding

Sponsor(s): RM of North Cypress (Western District), Town of Carberry (Western District)

Department(s): Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage

WHEREAS the current provincial maximum per capita levy amount for library funding is \$8.50 and was last raised in 2003;

AND WHEREAS funding for many libraries has been at this maximum rate for years;

AND WHEREAS the provincial funding falls short of the current financial requirements to operate libraries and increases to municipal levies are required annually just to sustain existing services;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to increase the per capita base rate funding for library boards to \$10.00.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to re-evaluate the funding formula for library boards annually or bi-annually to better reflect the actual cost of delivering the services.

AMM Resolution #22-2008

Topic: Library Cards

Sponsor(s): RM of Morris (Central District)

Department(s): Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage

WHEREAS each library system in Manitoba has its own identification cards for members;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba provides major funding to all libraries;

AND WHEREAS some residents may live closer to a library in a neighbouring district;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to mandate that all library cards issued in Manitoba be valid at any library that receives provincial funding.