

UBCM DAILY

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA MUNICIPALITIES
CONVENTION 2002
DAILY UPDATES



THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- 7:30 a.m. Clinics (4 concurrent)
- Community Airport Problem
 - New Agricultural Land Commission Initiatives
 - Innovative Community Drug Strategy
 - New Power Smart Solutions
- 8:35 a.m. "B" Resolutions
- 2:15 p.m. Address by the Premier, Hon. Gordon Campbell (Westin Resort)
- 3:15-5:00 p.m. **Concurrent Workshops:**
- Collaborative Governance
 - Innovations in Affordable Housing
 - Smart Growth Makes Good Business Cents

DAILY #2

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2002

President stresses need for clarity in defining downloading

CHAIR HANS Cunningham, President of the UBCM, in his address at the opening session of the 99th Annual Convention on Wednesday morning, spoke of the need for clarity – for clarity from local government officials



Chair Hans Cunningham

in the definition of terms and language used when dealing with the province. If we are to have a profitable dialogue with the province, he observed, we need to ensure that we are communicating in the same language. This clarity is especially important when it comes to the whole issue of downloading. To further this objective it is therefore important that we find a mutually understood definition, or perhaps definitions, as to what local government means when speaking of provincial downloading. President Cunningham noted that this is particularly relevant to the application of the "no downloading" principle as it is reflected in the Community Charter.

He observed that at the present time the views as to what constitutes downloading is on a continuum. At one end it is defined as the imposition by another level of government of new responsibilities onto local government without financial resources to pay for them, in other words unfunded mandates. At the other end of the continuum we have the view that it also includes the withdrawal of a service previously provided by another level of government, where the dynamic of that withdrawal of service starts to compel local government to assume delivery of the service. This has been termed passive downloading. Along this same continuum there is a range of other types of action, for example the closure of courthouses which obliges local government to incur additional costs by sending its police to a neighbouring city to do their court duty.

The record of the province in consulting with local government has been mixed, President Cunningham commented. Consultation takes time, he added, but it often results in better decisions. He observed that the Community Charter is a serious attempt to consult in the development of new legislation. However, there has also been disappointments in a lack of communication, including some aspects of the new liquor policy, the legislation

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Minister Nebbeling profiles Whistler as model for Charter powers

HONOURABLE TED NEBBELING, Minister of State for Community Charter, after welcoming delegates to his hometown of Whistler, used his community as an example of a municipality that has had the opportunity to avail itself of tools that facilitated its development as a world-class resort destination. He pointed out that the Community Charter would give local governments the ability to have similar capabilities that Whistler enjoyed under the Resort Municipality Act. Under this special Act, developers knew that they would not be faced with a lot of red tape, he noted, and this gave them the incentive to go ahead with the type of development Whistler now enjoys. The Whistler Resort Association was also given control over their community buildings, and the user fees generated are used for the resort community's promotion.

In speaking to the timing of the introduction of the Charter in the House, Nebbeling advised that he has received nearly 1,000 submissions from stakeholders after asking for feedback with the release of the Community Charter's draft in May of this year. He has asked the Premier to delay the introduction of the Bill until next March so that he could consider these submissions. "Start dreaming and start planning," he encouraged the delegates, "as the Community Charter will provide the means to realize those dreams." ■

Minister Abbott expresses optimism for BC's future

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNITY, Aboriginal, and Women's Services, the Honourable **George Abbott**, in his address to the UBCM Convention on Wednesday afternoon, commented on the important lessons that can be learned from the Whistler experience. Whistler, he stated, is an example of vision coupled with initiative, energy and enterprise yielding great results. The Minister believes that the whole province of British Columbia can become once again the envy of Canada and of the world if that same vision, initiative, energy and enterprise is employed across the whole province. He spoke of standing at the top of Silver Star and looking at a vista that includes mountains, lakes, forests, farmlands, orchards, and vibrant communities and being reminded of the tremendous resources and opportunities that exist in BC.

He acknowledged that change is inevitable, and that it is also necessary and ensures that communities remain vibrant and sustainable. He acknowledged that there are no easy answers and that the solutions are rooted in cooperation and partnership between the local and provincial levels of government.

Central to the provincial government's vision is the creation of safe, healthy and secure communities. In his Ministry, this includes addressing issues of access to affordable housing, supplying more housing for frail seniors, looking at the supply of clean water and the need to address aging systems and the demands of supplying water to growing communities. He added that the intent of the Community Charter is to work in a respectful and coordinated manner towards a partnership with local government that will provide tools to increase flexibility and innovation. ■

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2002 RESOLUTIONS DISPOSITIONS

The following is a summary of the resolutions and positions adopted at the 2002 convention. The full and exact wording of any amendment will appear in the convention minutes.

SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS

[NOTE: SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS APPEAR IN POLICY BOOK 2]

SR1 SPECIAL RESOLUTION ON CONSULTATION AND DOWNLOADING

Endorsed as amended

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be called upon to:

- 1) work to develop a better shared understanding by all Ministries and local government of what constitutes downloading;
- 2) ensure Ministries and agencies adhere to a principled definition of downloading;
- 3) prepare and implement plans for meaningful consultation with local governments and communities on changes to levels of provincial services or funding that will impact those communities;
- 4) ensure there is a full cost impact analysis, including social and environmental impacts, of changes in levels of service or funding prior to any changes being made; and
- 5) where changes are made, develop implementation plans that are sensitive to local issues such as the timing of service reduction impacts on communities and their ability to respond if necessary.

SR2 SPECIAL RESOLUTION ON TRANSPORTATION

Endorsed

SECTION A

A1 PROVINCIAL HOMEOWNER GRANT ADMINISTRATION

Endorsed

A2 REAFFIRMING HEALTH CAPITAL FUNDING FORMULA

Endorsed as amended

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities reaffirm its members' commitment to the existing cost sharing formula with the provincial government for health care capital project funding of at least 40%/60% where applicable;

AND IT BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Union of BC Municipalities requests a reaffirmation of commitment to that principle from the provincial government.

A3 PURCHASING PROVISIONS OF THE

AGREEMENT ON INTERNAL TRADE (AIT)

Endorsed

A4 AIR TRAVEL SECURITY CHARGE

Endorsed

A5 ENABLING STREETCARS ON CITY STREETS

Endorsed

A6 TELECOMMUNICATIONS TOWERS

Endorsed

C11 TRANSMISSION TOWERS AND TRANSMITTERS

Endorsed as amended

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities petition the federal government to:

1. transfer control over the location of wireless telecommunication antenna structures to local government land use authorities; or alternatively,
2. require Industry Canada to develop a mechanism that would enable the decision-makers in Industry Canada to receive and consider input from residents and landowners in the vicinity of proposed wireless telecommunication installations, including an appeal process, prior to the approval of same.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in formulating such mechanisms, Industry Canada consult with local Government land use authorities through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM).

SECTION B – PART I

[NO B1 RESOLUTIONS WERE PULLED FROM THE BLOCK FOR INDIVIDUAL DEBATE]

B1 SIDE ARMS FOR AUXILIARY POLICE

Endorsed

B2 RAISING THE AGE OF CONSENT

Endorsed

B3 AGAINST CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Endorsed

B4 COLLECTION OF MTI FINES - TYPE A TICKETS

Endorsed

B5 COLLECTION OF MTI FINES - TYPE B TICKETS

Endorsed

B6 FIRE SUPPRESSION RESPONSIBILITY

Endorsed

B7 TRAFFIC PATROL/ ADULT CROSSING GUARDS

Endorsed

B8 BC FERRY SERVICE CHANGES

Endorsed

B9 LICENSING OF OFF-ROAD/ALL-TERRAIN

VEHICLES

Endorsed

B10 PHASE OUT POLLUTION ABATEMENT EXEMPTIONS

Endorsed

B11 BC RAIL – PAYMENT OF FULL PROPERTY TAXES

Endorsed

B12 GAS FRANCHISE FEES

Endorsed

B13 PER CAPITA FUNDING FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Endorsed

B14 FIRE SERVICES ACT – INSURANCE PREMIUM TAX

Endorsed

B15 WATER CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

Endorsed

B16 COMMUNITY FLOOD PROTECTION IN BC

Endorsed

B17 LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC LANDS

Endorsed

B18 GRAVEL REMOVAL

Endorsed

B19 BC BUILDS WOOD INDUSTRY COMPETITIVENESS

Endorsed

B20 PROVINCIAL SUPPORT FOR RURAL BRITISH COLUMBIA

Endorsed

B21 NEED FOR PROVINCIAL HEALTH SMOKING REGULATIONS

Endorsed

B22 VIDEO GAMES RATING SYSTEM

Endorsed

B23 ACCESS TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

Endorsed

SECTION B - PART II

B24 SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE

Endorsed

B25 LIQUOR LICENSING

Not Endorsed

B26 CURFEW TO BE REINSTATED

Not Endorsed

B27 RURAL RCMP DETACHMENTS – RESIDENCY

Endorsed

POLICY PAPER #1: RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY CHARTER

All recommendations endorsed

Forestry – change in attitude needed to stay competitive

In a special session on Forest Policy early on Wednesday morning, the Honourable **Michael de Jong**, Minister of Forests, observed that the status quo in forestry management in the province is not working. Currently, the industry has been relegated to a noncompetitive status in the worldwide market as competitive challenges from other suppliers increase. Our rate of return on capital employed (ROCE) has been at a 3.3% average during the period of 1996 to 2000, and the industry is therefore not attracting investment. Additionally, there is a need to improve our worldwide public image. There is a changed reality in environmental awareness, he noted, and we have been internationally challenged in this regard and need to ensure that we maintain the highest of environmental standards. The Minister commented that there has been a preoccupation with the resolution of the US softwood lumber dispute and stressed that these other aspects must be addressed to bring the BC forest industry back as a vibrant and viable resource. He added that there is also an opportunity to involve First Nations in the forestry sector as we seek to develop a more robust market.

He observed that there are a number of interlocking issues connected to the cost issue. This is a challenge that must be addressed by all stakeholders in the industry as historic entitlements have collectively contributed to cost problems. Many of these problems have been caused by policies that constrain market forces, and that have been directed by social and political criteria. These constraints on market forces, he observed, undermines BC's long-term competitiveness and the dynamism of the forest sector. Changes being looked at include a market-based policy reform, complementary measures to strengthen public support, measures to enhance First Nation participation in the forest sector, and continued support of a negotiated settlement with the US. A market-based policy reform will include market-based stumpage fees and free fibre to be harvested and flow when and where it will be put to its highest and best use. The Minister commented that change is happening, and we can choose either to manage it or not. ■

FCM President lays out budget priorities

MUNICIPALITIES NEED A NEW deal for maintaining their fiscal sustainability, stated Alderman **John Schmal**, City of Calgary and President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in his address to delegates at Wednesday morning's session. This concern about local government's revenue sources has been voiced from many different quarters, including Canada's financial sector. Mr. Schmal noted that at the recent FCM Convention in Halifax, Paul Martin and other federal ministers also acknowledged that it is time for Ottawa to give local governments access to more revenues. Presently, only 7 cents out of each tax dollar collected is allocated to local government. The FCM is calling on FCM members to endorse the message that the tax dollars paid in the communities should be reinvested in the communities where the taxpayers live. As well the FCM, in its recommendations to the federal government for its upcoming Budget, is asking that a permanent infrastructure programme be instituted to allow for long-term planning, that a inter-modal transportation model be implemented, that work be undertaken to eliminate homelessness and provide affordable housing, that the municipal GST rebate be increased from 50% to 100%, and that the federal excise tax for gas used by municipalities be rescinded. ■

Councillor Patricia Wallace President Elect

The following UBCM Table Officers were elected by acclamation:

President:

- Councillor **Patricia Wallace**, Kamloops

First Vice-President:

- Mayor **Frank Leonard**, Saanich

Second Vice-President:

- Mayor **Helen Sparkes**, New Westminster

Balloting for Third Vice-President will continue between 8:00–9:00 am today outside the Sea to Sky ballrooms.

Thursday sessions will feature:

- presentation of nominations received for Director at Large, Small Community and Electoral Area Representatives (8:30 am)
- nominations (9:55 am)
- candidate speeches (10:00 am) ■

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repealing the *Pawnbrokers Act* and changes to the *Mineral Tenure Act* which proceeded without consultation. As a result, local governments are facing some legal uncertainties with these Acts.

President Cunningham also commented on the delay of the introduction of the Community Charter into the House until next spring. Being a Charter Council member, he is aware of the work left to be done, but advised the delegates that the Executive is calling on the province to put some of the key elements into place now. Specifically the principles of part 1 of the Charter and the required consultation elements of part 9. ■

MIA Election Results

- Councillor **Bonny Hawley**, Houston, was elected MIA Director at Large Wednesday.