

UBCM DAILY

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

UBCM 2003 / 100th AGM

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA MUNICIPALITIES

CONVENTION 2003 DAILY UPDATES

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- 7:30 a.m. **Clinics:**
- Understanding Development Cost Charges
 - Species at Risk and Local Government
 - Green Buildings in BC and North America
 - Power Smart Your Community
- 8:30 a.m. Convention Opening and Annual Meeting
- 9:20 a.m. Resolutions
- 11:20 a.m. Address by FCM President, Mayor Yves Ducharme
- 11:55 a.m. **Group Photo - 100th AGM (front plaza of the VCEC)**
- 2:00 p.m. Address by the Minister of CAWS, Hon. George Abbott
- 3:00–5:00 p.m. **Cabinet Session: A Panel with Ministers of ...**
- Health
 - Resources
 - Business and the Economy
 - Community and Safety
 - Education and Social Development

DAILY #1

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2003

Community Charter brings changes in 2004

IN MAY OF 2003, BILL 14, THE Community Charter, received royal assent and will come into effect on January 1, 2004. At that time, there will be new tasks required of elected officials. A Monday study session dispensed some practical advice on complying with the new requirements. As of the 1st of January, 2004, councils must provide a public schedule of regular council meetings, make specified records available for public inspection, and designate ticketable bylaws in those municipalities that may not have them. Other tasks are required to be completed by April 30, 2004 and June 30, 2004.

Also new is the requirement for councillors to track and declare protocol gifts over \$250 or totalling over \$250 from one source in one year; and the designing of rules around electronic participation, considerations regarding council size, and preparation of a unique oath of office if so desired.

This session also dealt with the opportunities that arise from the Community Charter. With clearly defined natural person powers, service powers, regulatory spheres and other opportunities available through this legislation, councils will have more than one option for dealing with issues within their communities. Two skits involving councillors and administrators were performed that illustrated the new "toolbox" provided under the Community Charter.

After the convention, see the UBCM website, www.civicnet.bc.ca for the Community Charter presentations made at this session. The Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services web site, www.mcaaws.gov.bc.ca/charter/index, has posted a great deal of information relevant to Community Charter implementation, and will be adding additional information on specific topics. The Ministry also has an advisory services toll-free number at 1-250-387-4020. ■

Solicitor General delays implementation of small community police costs recovery until 2007

IN A SURPRISE ANNOUNCEMENT before an audience of over 400 UBCM delegates on Monday, Solicitor General **Rich Coleman** announced a delay until 2007 for the implementation of any new police cost sharing formula for small communities and rural areas.

The Minister said that he was moved by the fire situation in the interior of BC in late-August and convinced his Cabinet colleagues that this was not the time to implement a new police cost formula. Changes would be implemented after the next census. In the question-and-answer session, the Minister indicated that specific concerns raised could be

addressed in the upcoming consultations.

In closing the session, **Hans Cunningham**, Chair of the UBCM Police Cost Task Force, thanked the Solicitor General for responding to the concerns expressed during the consultations and committed the UBCM to further consultations. ■

DON'T FORGET TO VISIT MUNICIPAL MARKETPLACE, EXHIBIT HALLS B/C 7:00 am to 4:30 pm

Staples McDannold Stewart ...

We provide a full range of legal services and administrative advice to local governments in British Columbia.

Visit our website at www.sms.bc.ca for more information about our firm and lawyers and for recent issues of our newsletters, client bulletins and other news items.

Partners Lorena Staples, Q.C.
Guy McDannold
Colin Stewart
Robert Macquisten
Kathryn Stuart

Associates Peter Johnson
Bruce Jordan
Troy DeSouza
Anita Bleick



2nd Floor, 837 Burdett Avenue, Victoria, BC V8W 1B3
Phone: (250) 380-7744; Fax: (250) 380-3008
logolaw@sms.bc.ca

A prescription for healthy relations

A THREEFOLD PRESCRIPTION for improving relations with the health sector was explored at a Monday morning study session. This session could be seen as a demonstration on the part of the health authorities present of reassurance to local communities that steps are being taken to deliver reliable and responsive health care throughout British Columbia.

The first part of the prescription is detailed in the newly released review on regional hospital district cost sharing which was prepared by Sierra Systems for the Ministry of Health Services. A copy of the review has been sent to all Regional Hospital District Chairs and Health Authority Chairs earlier this month. The purpose of the report is to identify the appropriate role for RHDs in capital planning and contribution decisions, and to simplify capital processes and address RHD concerns. All of the 23 RHDs participated in the review. The Honourable **Colin Hansen**, Minister of Health Services, outlined the recommendations presented in the report. The intent of the review is not to change the cost sharing formula, he commented, but to standardize planning while allowing local flexibility and to implement longer, rolling five-year terms for capital expenditures. Another objective is to enhance communications between RHDs and Health Authorities. Minister Hansen admitted that there was still much to be done to improve communications between the Health Authorities and the communities. "The onus is on the Health Authorities to develop workable communication with RHDs," he stated.

The second presentation was on telehealth, which is defined as the provision of health care whenever the participants are separated, using telecommunications. Dr. **Hal Siden**, Medical Director, Children's & Women's Health Centre of BC, said that many different forms of telecommunications can be used to link many different participants: physicians, administrators, nurses, patients, etc. for the purposes of diagnoses, exchange of information, access to expert consultation, and education. This "communication web" is being built up not only on a provincial level, but is growing nationally and internationally. Not only is travelling time being saved by both patients and doctors but telehealth, Dr. Siden commented, is "...building community capacity and creating a shared level of expertise."

The third part of the prescription was presented in a panel discussion on health authority initiatives and projects undertaken with local governments and local communities. **Wynne Powell**, Board Chair of the Provincial Health Services Authority stated that PHSA has a prov-

Any kind of alien is scary

ON A FIELD TRIP TO THE Cariboo in the summer of 2001, the Fraser Basin Council Board of Directors noticed how wide-spread the population of alien plant species, in other words, noxious weeds, had become. This awareness led to a series of public and stakeholder meetings which has resulted in the recently released report "Invasive Plant Strategy for British Columbia."

Roy Cranston from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Fisheries advised the clinic that alien species are recognized globally as the second-largest threat to biological plant diversity and native species. In BC there are over 40 invasive plant species which increase in population by 14% per year, and double their numbers every 5 years. Impacts of these invasive aliens include an increase in wildfire hazards, a suppression of forest regeneration, and increased soil erosion and stream sedimentation. They impact food production, reducing crop quality, host insects and diseases and are estimated to reduce farm incomes by 10%-15% annually. This can, in turn, affect property values.

The "Invasive Plant Strategy" report calls for a collective action plan and for the establishment of the British Columbia Invasive Plant Council to provide a coordinated effort towards invasive plant management in the province. A final workshop will be held on October 3rd, and the strategy will be finalized on October 31st. In November it will be presented to the provincial and federal governments, and the launch date of the BC Invasive Plant Council is anticipated to be April 1st, 2004. The Fraser Basin Council's web site is at www.fraserbasin.bc.ca. ■

ince-wide mandate to ensure the delivery of quality health care. PHSA was created in December 2001, has 10,000 employees and an annual budget of approximately \$1 billion and is responsible for managing the quality, co-ordination, accessibility and cost of selected province-wide health care programs and services. More information about PHSA can be found at their web site at www.phsa.ca.

Keith Purchase, Board Chair, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, provided an urban perspective on Health Authority initiatives and spoke of some of the many projects which connect and involve the local communities on a partnership basis. **Alan Dolman**, Board Chair, Interior Health Authority, spoke of the challenges presented in developing an accountable and transparent process of health administration which was inclusive of all stakeholders. He stated that the mandate of the CEOs of the six newly formed Health Authorities is to consult with local representatives on a regular, consistent basis. ■

Urban Forum looks at the next 100 years

AT THE TUESDAY MORNING FORUM for large urban communities, team members from the Canadian entry in the international Sustainable Urban Systems Design Competition held in Tokyo this summer gave delegates a look at their winning presentation. Their task was to envision a plan that would encompass a 100-year outlook toward sustainability in the Greater Vancouver region and bring the region into the next century as a vibrant, disaster resistant, environmentally sound and extremely livable centre. This thoughtful and exciting presentation is available at www.sheltair.com. For more information on citiesPLUS visit their website at www.citiesplus.ca.

The citiesPLUS team reflected on several lessons learned that would provide insight and guidance to other BC communities, large and small, when looking at their planning goals and horizons. The 100-year planning exercise contributed to a very positive look ahead, exploring innovations and opportunities that would not be possible within a shorter planning horizon. The team thus asks the question: Shouldn't communities be considering Official Community Plan horizons longer than 20 years in order to realize some long-range opportunities?

The team also recognizes that their win presents an opportunity for all BC communities to continue leadership in planning for sustainable urban and rural futures. The 2006 World Urban Forum and the 2010 Olympics will be opportunities to showcase local innovation and attract interest and investment in the province. ■

Mid-sized communities connect

THIS YEAR, FOR THE FIRST TIME, mid-sized communities (those having a population between 5,000 and 20,000) had their own forum in which they could discuss issues that were of mutual concern. The first theme explored was that of the role of elected and appointed officials in mid-sized communities and the second theme was nurturing economic development. In a presentation on the topic of CED given by **Renee Bernier**, Regional Economic Adjustment Coordinator, Community Futures of Boundary Area, the idea of thinking ahead was emphasized. You cannot drive forward if you are looking in the rearview mirror. Delegates shared their experiences in fostering community economic development and discussed the pros and cons of various CED models: employing an economic development officer, working within an economic development commission, having an economic development corporation, or working within a non-profit society. ■