



60-10551 SHELLBRIDGE WAY
 RICHMOND, B.C. V6X 2W9
 Ph (604) 270-8226 Fax (604) 270-9116
 E-mail: ubcm@civicnet.gov.bc.ca

MEMBER RELEASE May 10, 2002

MAY 2002 EXECUTIVE RELEASE

The Executive and Committee meetings were held May 3rd and 4th 2002 in Quesnel in conjunction with the annual conference of the North Central Municipal Association. This continues the practice of the Executive meeting at one of the regional associations, usually every second year. The last Executive regional participation was with the Lower Mainland Municipal Association.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The President reported on his activities including attending all Area Association meetings, the Order of BC Awards advisory committee, meetings with the Solicitor General on policing in small communities (reported on in a President's circular).
- The Executive approved directions to establish a small working group in conjunction with the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services to examine options to **revisit Bill 55** (rail assessment and taxation); prepare legal advice for members on the implications for business regulation given the **repeal of the Pawnbrokers**

- Act:** write the Auditor General about the members concerns with the **federal ports and harbours divestiture process**; make representations on concerns related to the **Agriculture Land Commission Act (Bill 21)** and associated regulations; will continue to pursue **BC Rail payments in lieu of taxes** and will also seek a **waiver of costs** to local government of easements and crossings.
- Received reports on new information related to **provincial government restructuring new legislation** (see UBCM "In the House" bulletins); interim report researching on the provincial government's performance regarding **consultation with local government**; proposal for

- an MOU with Land & Water BC on a template for **referral agreements** with local governments.
- Received **financials** which show the organization on budget; all members have renewed their membership in UBCM; approved UBCM to do more work on **BC Gas operating agreements** with interested municipalities; were advised that Assistant Executive Director, Marie Crawford, is on maternity leave until January 2003; set new format for budgeting Executive expenses and adjusted the current budget accordingly.
- Approved a request for financial assistance for an appeal of a recent legal decision involving the District of North Vancouver.

COMMITTEES

LIABILITY TASK FORCE

Is preparing its response to the Attorney General's Consultation Paper focusing on key interests of joint and several liability. The Executive approved a circular, which was sent to members on May 6. Further information is available through Civicnet, www.civicnet.gov.bc.ca.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The Committee discussed a number of issues including the new provincial liquor policy,

courthouse closures, regulations for rating video games, gaming policy, impact of the new census figures on policing costs and auxiliary police services. The following actions were endorsed by the Executive:

The UBCM Executive seek clarification around the changes to the provincial liquor policy and specifically around the following issues:

- Broader Grouping of Businesses - any business primarily engaged in hospitality, entertainment, food or beverage business will be eligible to apply for a liquor license;
- Extended Operating Hours - 9 a.m to 4 a.m.; and
- Dual Restaurant/Bar Licensing.

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isit updated Civicnet web page for links to policy issues such as:

- *Forest Policy/Softwood Lumber*
- *UBCM Response to the Energy Policy Task Force Interim Report*
- *UBCM Review of Civil Liability*
- *Rural/Small Community Policing Costs*
- *Provincial Government Restructuring*

www.civicnet.gov.bc.ca

Please make copies of this circular and distribute to Council/Board Members /Staff.

The UBCM Executive suggest to the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General the need for the following measures:

- Increased compliance and enforcement – ability to close establishments where problems arise;
- Ability for local government to provide conditional approval to liquor changes – 4 a.m. hours of operation etc.; and
- Need for cost recovery provisions – charge problem establishments on a per call basis.

MEMBER SERVICES/LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARENESS

The Committee reviewed a number of Member Services programs and staff were requested to contact the members of the UBCM Tax Notice Service program to participate in discussing changes to make the Tax Notice Service a full cost recovery Member Services Program.

COMMUNITY & RESOURCES

The Committee addressed forestry and softwood policy, we're updated on the Premier's softwood summit, energy policy and the Task Force report, and received correspondence involving resolutions, an invitation for involvement in an upcoming review of federal agriculture policy and the Lower Mainland TAC position on fish farming. The following actions were endorsed by the Executive;

- prepare a report outlining UBCM policy and resolutions with respect to all matters that affect the economic security of forest resource communities, and that this report support UBCM discussions with the province, who will be invited to participate in a joint forest communities summit, ideally in conjunction with the July Executive

- meeting;
- research the proposed federal community assistance strategies (Community Economic Adjustment and HRDC Employment Benefits) to determine manner of program delivery, and criteria for the evaluation of eligibility for these benefits, and provide a UBCM response if necessary;
- investigate opportunities to provide information or make representation regarding softwood policy to the United States Conference of Mayors in June; and
- provide input on survey material from the Forest Sector Strategy Secretariat.
- investigate involvement in development of a new federal agriculture policy.

CONVENTION

The planning for the 2002 convention is progressing nicely with many elements in place. The theme will be "Freestyling" to symbolize the Whistler location and the autonomy, independence, innovation and flexibility associated with individuality and creativity in local government. The delegate lunch (mountain picnic) will be on Whistler Mountain after a short gondola ride. The banquet will not include a band this year in order to give delegates an evening to enjoy local entertainment establishments.

ENVIRONMENT

The Committee discussed a number of issues, such as the final report of the Drinking Water Review Panel; the report of the Streamside Advisory Committee on implementation of the streamside protection regulation; new provincial legislation (Bill 31-Environment Management Act which empowers the province to enter into agreements with other government agencies with respect

to enforcement delivery; Bill 32-Waste Management Amendment Act which limits the liability at historic mine sites and provides broader authority for the regional manager to allow development at some contaminated sites); a new stewardship program proposed by the information technology and Telecom industry; climate change policy; proposed changes in legislative and regulatory framework for environmental assessment; upcoming panel review of the contaminated sites regulations; new Pest Control Products Act introduced by the federal government; federal and provincial strategy concerning dioxins and furans. The Executive endorsed the following contacts with:

Streamside Protection Regulation

- the Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection indicating UBCM support of the regulation based on the criteria outlined and requesting ongoing financial and technical assistance to local government to implement the Streamside Protection Regulation.

Legislative Amendments

- the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection to request the need for clarification and further consultation with local government about the development and implementation of its policy concerning the management of low risk sites.
- the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection to request clarification about the re-development of historic mine sites and the liability related to the development of these sites.
- the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection to request clarification as to the intent of the amendment to Section 946.2 (2) (d) of the Local Government Act outlined in Bill 32-Waste Management Amendment Act.

Telecom Equipment – Stewardship Program

- the Information Technology Association of Canada,

Environment Canada and the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection indicating UBCM supports the development and implementation of an industry stewardship program for IT and telecom equipment that is fully funded by the industry and includes education, marketing, collection, transportation and processing of the material.

Climate Change Policy

- the Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection requesting that local government continue to be involved in the development of provincial climate change policy.

HEALTH

The Committee discussed a number of issues including concerns about the future status of Regional Hospital Districts (RHDs) and how UBCM and RHDs would work together on a strategic approach; issues of relevance to local government in exposure Bill 16 (Community Care Facilities Act); and UBCM participation in the Ambulance Service Core Review, for which UBCM would be soliciting input from the membership. The Committee also received information reports on a variety of health related issues, including: new government policy on provincial health access standards; report from the Population Health Conference; summary of recommendations from the Report of the Select Standing Committee on Health; implementing new WCB Environmental Tobacco Smoke regulations; status of Health Match BC; and UBCM participation in the Canadian Rural Partnership.

The Executive endorsed the following recommendations to:

- seek clarification from the province on the status of RHDs;
- work with RHDs to develop a strategy

- for improving RHD working relationships and to consider local government views on the future of RHDs, possibly for presentation as a UBCM policy paper at convention;
- direct staff to seek membership input and to prepare a submission to the government on exposure Bill 16 (Community Care Facility Act); and
- prepare a UBCM submission to the Ambulance Service Core Review, and to specifically ensure that it incorporates concerns of rural, remote and small communities.

ABORIGINAL

The Aboriginal Affairs Committee discussed several policy issues including: developing an updated agreement with the province on local government participation in treaty negotiations; implications of the decision in *Haida Nation v. Minister of Forests and Weyerhaeuser* for local governments; recent expansion of the First Nations Land Management Act to other BC First Nations; and policy development on treaty negotiations and lands within municipal boundaries. They also reviewed progress at the Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo) treaty table, the re-establishment of FCM's Centre for Municipal-Aboriginal Relations (CMAR) and organization for the next Community to Community Forum with the First Nations Summit. (this meeting has since been postponed to Spring 2003 due to a scheduling conflict).

Among the recommendations approved by the Executive were:

- that the Committee Chair re-emphasize to Minister Geoff Plant the importance of local government participation in treaty negotiations, the contribution they make to the process and their funding needs;
- that UBCM send a complete analysis to our members on the decision in *Haida Nation v. Minister of Forests*

- and *Weyerhaeuser*, once the results of the oral hearing on June 4 are known;
- that, in the short term, UBCM send out an informational bulletin to members regarding expansion of the First Nations Land Management Act, as soon as the legislation is expanded;
- that the Central Coast Regional District's application for regional Community to Community Forum funding in the amount of \$4,940.00 be approved;
- that the Committee Chair write to the Minister Responsible for Treaty Negotiations to express UBCM's concern with the land selection process at the Snuneymuxw treaty table and urge the Minister to come to an agreement with the City of Nanaimo on their participation; and state UBCM's position that municipal interests in lands within their boundaries must be considered through direct and on-going municipal input; and
- a further recommendation that the draft budget for the June 11th Community to Community Forum and preliminary program be approved (this meeting has since been postponed to Spring 2003 due to a scheduling conflict).

Release of the Community Charter

The Premier has indicated that government has committed to tabling the Community Charter at this session of the Legislature. The current sitting wraps up on May 30th. He also indicated the government was taking extra time to examine the Community Charter. He said that given a favorable response to the proposals, government needed to be sure it could deliver on the expectations. UBCM is looking to hold a Conference on the Community Charter about one month after its release at a downtown Vancouver location.