

Highlights of January 20-21, 2005 Executive Meeting

The UBCM Executive met on January 20-21, 2005. During the two days, 9 Committee meetings were held in conjunction with the quarterly meeting which included a delegation with the Honourable Murray Coell, Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services.

During its meeting the Executive:

- re-iterated its preference to roll the funding available under the federal **Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund** into the existing Infrastructure program rather than establish a new application and review process.
 - were advised of preparatory work continuing for negotiations on the **New Deal** for Cities and Communities.
 - indicated it would provide comments to the Ministries of Small Business and Economic Development and Transportation on the Ports Strategy.
 - agreed to monitor any proposed changes to the **rural subdivision review process** by the Ministry of Transportation and to the BC Assessment Act by the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management.
 - will write the Premier with respect to the one time grant of **\$25 million** for tourism.
 - reviewed the new **Public Library** Strategic Plan.
 - approved preparation of a discussion paper on "Looking Ahead – a vision for UBCM's Second Century."
 - appointed Mayor Jack Peake to the Community Economic Development committee and Richard Taylor to the Land Title and Survey Authority stakeholder advisory committee.
 - reviewed provincial government responses to 2004 resolutions
- and provided direction to follow-up or monitor where appropriate. Sponsors have been provided copies of the responses. This is the earliest date for receipt of provincial responses.
 - considered a variety of correspondence.
 - were advised that two new policy analysts had been retained - **Jared Wright and Peter Larose**.
 - discussed the results of a performance review survey of UBCM by the Executive in keeping with the meeting theme of "Looking Inward".
 - reviewed the status for the various provincially funded programs and expectations for 2005 initiatives. Some of the highlights include:
 - **sprinkler protection units** were deployed for 69 days, employed in a number of communities saving some 12 structures.
 - funded all 27 regional district **emergency planning** requests and funded 42 municipalities that applied prior to the deadline - a second phase of the program is planned.
 - development of phase 1 of **Seniors Housing Initiative**.
 - completed provincial fire fuel hazard mapping project and provided funding to 22 local governments for **community wildfire protection** plans.

Committee Reports

Presidents

The Presidents Committee considered a variety of organizational and administrative matters as well as reports on the 2005 **Excellence Awards** program, proposed UBCM **Centenary** projects, evaluation of annual work plan, successful CEO forum and were advised that plans were underway for the 2006 **Newly**

Elected Officials seminars.

The following recommendations were approved:

- approved plan for up to 50 **member visits** to members in the Cariboo/Northwest region, Kootenays and northern Vancouver Island.
- continue to review options for the future of Municipal House
- advise members of a pending **Municipal Pension Plan** employer contribution rate increase equal to 1% of salaries.

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

- authorize the Committee to approve the final plan renewals with Pacific Blue Cross and Great West Life and undertake a market review of the program.

Convention

The Convention Committee, considered a number of matters including an analysis of final numbers and comments received from the Delegate Evaluation Booklet, a discussion on staff suggestions to improve the Convention and a look at final financial statements and sponsorship dollars.

Planning for the 2005 Convention got underway with a discussion on the preliminary program, centennial celebration possibilities and budget and sponsorship goals. Included in the discussion was an overview of the Municipal Marketplace, Partners Program and audio/visual needs. The following recommendations were approved by the Executive:

- adopt the Convention theme "**Celebrating the Legacy, Charting the Future**".
- adopt preliminary Convention program time allocations, clinics, workshops and numbers of pre-conference sessions.
- adopt the following registration fees and sponsorship goals:
 - Member registration fee of \$335
 - Non-member registration fee of \$420
 - Provincial government meeting support fee of \$90
 - Sponsorship goal of \$140,000
- prepare a memo to be included in the registration package explaining convention costs, including a cost comparison analysis.

Environment

The following recommendations were approved by the Executive:

- continue to monitor the implementation of the new **Riparian Areas Regulation** and inform the provincial government as to the 'state of readiness' of local government to implement this regulation at the next meeting with the Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection.
- notify Environment Canada about local government concerns regarding the costs of implementation the new planning requirements under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act regarding **municipal wastewater effluents**, the time frame that has been established for implementing the measures and the need to link the planning and enforcement requirements.
- send an urgent member notice informing local government of the new regulations under Environment Canada's management strategy for wastewater effluents.

- send a letter to the Minister of Water, Land, and Air Protection requesting provincial assistance in harmonizing the CEPA requirements in order to establish certainty and consistency in implementing the federal regulatory requirement and inviting him to attend the next UBCM Environment Committee meeting to discuss Environment Canada's management strategy for wastewater effluents.
- send a letter to the Minister of Water, Land, and Air Protection requesting that the revenue from the **scrap tire and battery programs** not used in the administration of said programs be distributed to assist local governments in managing local solid waste management plans.

Community Economic Development

The following activities and directions were approved by the Executive:

- survey members to identify impediments to **community economic development** and solicit information on the types of economic development plans amongst the membership and identify best practices and success stories that could then be shared.
- seek clarification on the status of the Community Forests Advisory Committee.
- write to Hon. John Efford, federal Natural Resources Minister reiterating local government concerns with respect to the long term implications of the **mountain pine beetle**, seek federal assistance in the development of a long term rehabilitation plan for the region and encourage the sharing of information on the economic development implications of the mountain pine beetle with all potentially affected local governments.
- solicit member comment on DFO's proposed **Wild Salmon Policy** and finalize UBCM submission to DFO.
- request that the Working Group under the MOU on IPPs be activated to address the lack of regional planning with respect to IPP development.
- commend the provincial government on the consultation process undertaken in the Mount Waddington RD on the wind power project in that region.

Healthy Communities

The Committee had an opportunity to raise a number of local government priority concerns in a productive meeting with the Hon. Shirley Bond, Minister of Health Services and the Hon. Brenda Locke, Minister of State for Mental Health and Addiction Services. The following activities and directions were approved by the Executive:

- support for the BC Healthy Living Alliance's Healthy Living Targets for 2010, which are: 9 out of 10 British Columbians will not smoke; 7 out of 10 British Columbians will be eating at least 5 fruits and vegetables a day; 7 out of 10 British Columbians will be physically active; 7 out of 10 British Columbians will be at a healthy weight.
- pursue discussions with the Ministry of Health Services support for **community-based health promotion**.
- participate in the Ministry of Health Services Planning Group to advise on implementing Healthy Communities in BC.

Regional District Task Force

The Task Force met with the project consultant and confirmed direction on the elements of the Regional District (RD) Toolkit. The following activities and directions were approved by the Executive:

- Task Force Chair to make presentations on the **RD Toolkit** at all five Area Association meetings and seek member feedback.
- approve work program and timelines for RD Toolkit development, to be completed before 2005 UBCM Convention.
- convey UBCM's paper on Developing Regional District Authority to hold **Electronic Meetings** to the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services with a recommendation that we proceed with this initiative in consultation with regional districts.

First Nations Relations

The First Nations Relations Committee reviewed a number of activities and policy issues with respect to treaty negotiations and local government - First Nations relations. The Committee met with a representative from the Federal Treaty Negotiation Office to discuss the federal approach to governance in final agreements. As well, the Executive approved the following Committee actions:

- approve a series of treaty-related communication activities for Treaty Advisory Committees (TACs) and other affected local government members.
- approve six new applications for **Community to Community Forum** funding.
- direct staff to have a study conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Community and Women's Services and the provincial Treaty Negotiation Office, to examine the issue of treaty-related transition funding for local governments.
- review and set direction on a number of key treaty related policy areas, including additions to **Treaty Settlement Lands** and First Nations governance and local government relations.

- direct staff to pursue the development of a **local government - First Nations relations newsletter** in collaboration with the First Nations Summit and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.
- direct staff to pursue the development of an **annual awards program** for local government - First Nations relations with the First Nations Summit.

Resolutions

The Committee reviewed its terms of reference and the coming year's resolutions timeline. A discussion of delegate feedback on the 2004 resolutions process followed and Committee members discussed their experiences during the resolutions sessions at Convention.

The Executive approved the following Committee recommendations:

- post resolutions start times on the Message Board in order to better communicate resolutions timing to delegates.
- remind delegates that only elected officials of member local governments are considered "delegates entitled to participate in debates" at Convention.

Community Safety

The Committee met with delegations from the Ministry of Attorney General, the RCMP and the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

The Committee received an update on the future development and expansion of the **bylaw adjudication process** from Wayne Willows, Director, Corporate Planning & Program Services, Ministry of Attorney General.

The Committee also received a presentation from Alain Bisson, RCMP Financial Manager, RCMP "E" Division on where local government will see an increase in financial costs for RCMP services in the upcoming year (increase in RCMP wages etc.).

The Committee received a strategic overview on the **delivery of police services** in the province from Kevin Begg, Assistant Deputy Minister and Sam MacLeod, Associate Director, Police Services Division. The following issues were highlighted:

- implementation of the DNA testing system.
- expansion of PRIME communication network.
- introduction of new traffic enforcement unit in the Lower Mainland and Lower Vancouver Island, purchase of a new helicopter to help deal with traffic issues in the Lower Mainland.

- expansion of Provincial Force resources (additional officers for policing on reserves and in rural areas, etc.).
- creation of a new gang unit.

The following recommendations were approved by the Executive:

- request a copy of the report on the evaluation of the **Bylaw Adjudication System** pilot projects on the North Shore communities when it is complete.
- write the Ministry of Attorney General and request that it continue to be involved in the appointment of the bylaw adjudicators and the training of bylaw adjudicators and local government staff on implementation of the new system. Furthermore that the ministry consider paying the costs of the bylaw adjudicators to ensure that they are viewed as 'independent adjudicators' in the public's mind.
- write the Ministry of Attorney General and request that a process be established so that the new bylaw adjudication system can be expanded to other local governments which may want to introduce it.
- monitor the review of the **search warrant** process being undertaken by the province and the changes that are recommended to the system.

Delegation: Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services, the Honourable Murray Coell

Accompanying the Minister were Assistant Deputy Minister Dale Wall and Ministerial Assistant Fraser Randall. The Executive engaged the Minister in discussion on the following matters:

New Deal for Cities and Communities

Minister Coell advised that a letter was recently sent to Minister Godfrey, urging him to sign on to the ten-point plan for New Deal implementation agreed upon by UBCM and the provincial government.

Library Strategic Plan

The Minister discussed the recent release of the Strategic Plan for BC Public Libraries by the Public Library Services Branch. He advised that the Province has approved the plan and funding is now in place for its implementation. Mr. Dale Wall highlighted the major initiatives of interest to local government, including development of a "One Card" system for public library users throughout the province and a comprehensive review of the Library Act.

Traffic Fine Revenues

Minister Coell advised that a letter of understanding was sent to UBCM indicating how monies will flow to affected communities under this initiative. Executive members were advised that specific amounts will be announced sometime between the end of February and the middle of March and that monies will be distributed early in the new fiscal year. Executive members thanked the Minister for exceeding local government expectations in the return of traffic fine revenues. (copy of Minister Coell's letter is located at [www.civicnet.bc.ca/About UBCM/General Information/MOUs and Protocols](http://www.civicnet.bc.ca/About%20UBCM/General%20Information/MOUs%20and%20Protocols)).

Required Consultation on Local Government Grants Act

Mr. Wall briefly reviewed the following provincial grant programs:

- Traffic Fine Revenues – funds committed to local governments; will be an inherently fluctuating source of revenue;
- Canada BC Infrastructure Program – all project allocations made; Province talking with federal government about a nation-wide deadline extension for project completion;
- Small Community Protection – no structural changes to this program; population changes may result in minor adjustments in funding distribution.

The Executive expressed satisfaction that provincial grants have been maintained and stressed the importance of extending the Canada BC Infrastructure Program deadline in light of the booming BC construction industry and the prospect of the early deadline pushing prices up. The difficulties faced by small communities in coming up with their one-third portion for infrastructure projects was also noted.

Administration of Provincial Grant Programs

It was noted that UBCM has done well with the provincial grant programs introduced over the past year and has received positive feedback from the Ministries involved. The Minister was advised that UBCM is building capacity to deal with the provincial grant programs and is looking to build on the past year's experiences. The Minister expressed satisfaction with UBCM's administration of the programs and encouraged the Executive to consider approaching the Province for dedicated funding in the future if there are specific initiatives we would like to propose.

Other Business

Other topics that arose for discussion with the Minister included: funding for the Olympic LiveSite program; status of BC Rail - taxation versus grants in lieu; directing the funds from Fire Insurance Premium Tax back to fire service funding and E & N Railway.