

Highlights of the February 23-24, 2006 UBCM Executive Meeting

The Executive held the second full Executive meeting and the first involving new members appointed as a consequence of the November elections. The Executive held nine committee and task force meetings and met with the Honourable Ida Chong, Minister of Community Services and her senior staff. A full day workshop of Executive and others was held the day prior to the meetings to discuss the curriculum for the Local Government Leadership Academy.

The Executive took action in a number of policy areas, including:

- Development of a new approach to address its **liability** concerns through construction insurance requirements and concurrent legislation to implement a 10 year ultimate limitation period.
- Continue to work with the Province to address **assessment exemption** issues.
- Continue to work with Ministry of Health in identifying steps that local government can take to prepare for a **pandemic flu** event.
- Monitor the actions of the Office of the Fire Commissioner in developing an information package and operational guidelines to assist Local Assistants to the Fire Commissioner and local governments to determine if an **upgrading of existing buildings** is required and what actions it might take to ensure an acceptable level of safety.
- Determine the Province's current direction on Short Term Overnight Commercial Accommodation Properties (**STOCAPS**) and continue to research implications of creating a separate accommodation class.
- Continue to monitor and support the direction to move ahead with the proposed recommendations for **ATV/ORV** Licensing and Regulation.
- Continue to monitor projects on the "watch" list of the **Canada – BC Infrastructure Program** and complete final tasks in concluding the current program.
- Confirmed financial **legal assistance** (1/3 to a max. of \$10,000) to the District of Highlands in an appeal respecting the holding of a public hearing outside of municipal boundaries.
- Received correspondence from the Province confirming that \$50 million would be returned to policing communities from **traffic fine revenue** sharing in 2006/07; were advised that the Province is developing a process for addressing any requirement to review the **ports land valuation** methodology; and received an update from the BC Olympic Games Secretariat as to activities and work undertaken to promote BC communities in Torino and Beijing.

Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF)

The Executive agreed that continuing to negotiate MRIF as an extension to the existing Canada-BC Infrastructure program (the current proposal) is the preferred approach and may also be a springboard to an expanded infrastructure program for future years. The Executive directed that UBCM contact the BC Conservative Caucus

and Cabinet to alert them to this opportunity and, based on apparent interest, the UBCM President write to, and meet with if possible, federal and provincial ministers identifying current efforts, issues and opportunities with MRIF negotiations and urging them to take action to close the deal in BC.

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

Local Govt Leadership Academy (LGLA)

The Executive were advised that 31 local governments have contributed more than \$27,000 to the establishment of the Academy. A workshop prior to the Executive meeting helped to define the purposes of the LGLA. The Executive directed that more information be provided to members to support a renewed fundraising initiative. For more information please see www.civicnet.bc.ca and look under Programs & Services.

Municipal House

UBCM's permanent site in Victoria is taking shape. We intend to profile our newest location during the 2006 Convention. The site was donated by the Province of British Columbia on the occasion of UBCM's 100th Anniversary.

Local Govt Program Services (LGPS)

Received a report that all program administration is going well. Tourism and Crystal Meth applications are being approved in short timeframes. Financial statements for UBCM administration are available online as of December 31, 2005. See www.civicnet.bc.ca and look under Programs & Services.

New Deal Management Program

Received reports on the:

- New Deal Community Works Fund Agreements.
- New Deal Tier 3 (GVRD) Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF) Agreement.
- New Deal Business Planning for UBCM management program operations.
- New Deal Tier 1 and 2 Strategic Priorities Fund program development.
- New Deal reporting requirements for municipalities and regional districts.

The Executive also dealt with elements of a negotiating mandate with respect to allocation of an additional \$105 million in federal funding for **transit**. An agreement to transfer these funds must be negotiated with the federal and provincial governments.

Provincial Responses to 2005 Resolutions

The Executive received the report on provincial responses to 2005 resolutions and directed that those resolutions relevant to Committees be referred to Committees for review and further action where deemed appropriate. Staff was directed to follow up as necessary on other resolutions and to follow up with the new federal government on resolutions relating to federal policy matters. Copies of the responses have been forwarded to the sponsors and a full listing of the provincial responses will soon be available at www.civicnet.bc.ca under Resolutions & Policy.

2006 Newly Elected Officials Seminars

A preliminary report on the 2006 series of six seminars indicates good overall ratings (4.2 to 4.6 out of 5 ratings and a 93% good/excellent overall rating), with the best rating from the newest seminar in Nelson. Attendance overall seems to be down slightly. A final report will be considered at the next Executive meeting.

New Federal Government

UBCM Executive considered how to engage the new federal government.

For further information on the federal election, please see News/Announcements at www.civicnet.bc.ca for:

- List of British Columbia MPs.
- List of British Columbia government leaders.
- Conservative platform "Stand Up for Canada" excerpts of interest to local governments.

Provincial Throne Speech, Budget and Legislation

The Executive received a report on legislation presented to date during the current legislative session. They also reviewed separate reports on the provincial Throne Speech and 2006 Budget, noting those items of particular interest to local governments. It should be noted that the \$114 million for infrastructure refers to costs of paying down already approved grants and does not represent 'new' money.

EXECUTIVE MEETS WITH MINISTER

The Executive met with the Honourable Ida Chong, Minister of Community Services. The Minister provided an update on several initiatives of concern to local governments.

Traffic Fine Revenue

The Minister acknowledged that \$49 million in traffic fine revenue would be returned to local governments this year. She also pointed out that there have been some concerns voiced that funding has not been used to strengthen policing and community safety initiatives.

Small Communities & Regional District Grants

The Premier announced in September 2005 that the Province would double small community and regional district grants within four years. The Ministry is planning on phasing the increase in over four years.

Policing Costs

The Minister acknowledged that the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General has been mandated to implement a new policing costs model by 2007.

Local Government Leadership Academy

The Minister noted that the Premier committed \$1 million at the UBCM Convention for the creation of a Leadership Academy. The Academy will provide leadership training to elected officials and address elected officials/staff

relations, and will provide a foundation for developing new relationships with First Nations.

Transit Funding

The Minister stated that the \$100 million transit agreement is still under negotiations, but that there were no foreseeable obstacles for concluding the agreement. The Province has requested that the federal government not place too many conditions on the use of the funds.

New Deal

The Minister highlighted the need for the first year of the New Deal's implementation to be successful. She pointed out that BC has been selected to be part of a working group that will monitor the implementation of the New Deal for Cities and Communities across the country.

First Nations

The Minister acknowledged that there is significant work to be done on developing a new relationship with First Nations. The Province has announced a \$100 million New Relationship Fund, which will be used for capacity building and skills development for First Nations.

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BCSTA - UBCM Protocol Renewal

As part of the UBCM Executive Meeting, UBCM President Marvin Hunt and Executive members joined the BC School Trustees Association delegates at their conference for a Protocol signing ceremony. The Protocol on Consultation and Cooperation first signed in 2001 between UBCM and BCSTA was reconfirmed by both parties and signed by President Hunt and BCSTA President, Penny Tees on Friday February 24th. The re-signing signals the commitment by both parties to work together to promote enhanced local government – school board relations.

In addition to the signing ceremony, President Hunt took the opportunity to profile the partnership between the two associations in delivering the School Community Connections Program. The Program, jointly managed by the BC School Trustees Association and the Union of BC Municipalities on behalf of the Ministry of Education, provides funding to encourage partnerships between schools and local governments to greater utilize school facilities for broader community purposes. It is designed to promote sustainable and innovative collaboration between school boards and local governments and take into account the needs of the community as a whole.

As part of the ceremony, President Hunt made a cheque presentation to Director Gerri Logan of the Okanagan Similkameen RD and Gordon Comeau, Chair of the Nicola Similkameen School Board to fund their project under the Program which will provide the School District and the Regional District with resources necessary to move closer to converting the former Riverside Intermediate School in Princeton into a Family Wellness and Community Centre. President Hunt also noted that this was the first application in the Developing the Connection component of the Program to be approved.

For further information and photos of the signing ceremony please go to News/Announcements at www.civicnet.bc.ca.

COMMITTEES

Presidents

Approved a legislative request for the realignment of the Commercial Vehicle License year with the regular municipal calendar year. Among other considerations was the appointment of Robert Hobson as an alternative Trustee to the Municipal Pension Plan.

Community Economic Development

The Community Economic Development Committee received status reports on a variety of policy areas including forest, fishing and energy. The Executive approved actions in the following areas:

- Seek funding assistance from both provincial and federal governments to address the Western Pine Beetle.
- Continue to provide input into the BC Coalition for implementing the National Forest strategy.
- Provide input into the Oil and Gas Regulatory Review Initiative and the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources' development of a new energy plan for BC.
- Determine the status of the BC Film Commission review and encourage the Minister responsible to increase funding to the Regional Film Commissions at the earliest opportunity.

Environment

The Environment Committee reviewed the status of several policy and regulatory issues, and approved the following direction on the Riparian Areas Regulation Tripartite Protocol Agreement:

- Circulate the draft tripartite agreement on the Riparian Areas Regulation to UBCM members with the request that they provide immediate feedback.
- Allow the UBCM President to sign the agreement pending the absence of substantive concerns following the membership's review of the agreement, and the completion of all the implementation tools prior to the March 31st, 2006 deadline with a review of the regulation 6 months after the March 31st implementation date; and
- That the review take place in conjunction with the 2006 UBCM Convention.

Healthy Communities

The Committee discussed communications plans for the Community Health Promotion Fund (CHPF), including reporting progress, results and opportunities to the provincial/federal governments and communities. In addition, the Committee reviewed a draft survey on current communications/consultation initiatives between local governments and health authorities and plans for presentation of results at the 2006 UBCM Convention.

The Executive approved the following Committee directions:

- With respect to the Community Health Promotion Fund (CHPF), a report on interim pilot projects be tabled at the July meeting and the next call for applications be tentatively scheduled for September 2006.
- UBCM send out the finalized survey on Health Authorities to UBCM members and send a similar survey to regional Health Authorities concurrently.
- In collaboration with BC Healthy Communities, UBCM submit a report on the activities and accomplishments to date of this initiative and request funding for 2006-2007.
- UBCM support and participate in a second phase of the Local Government Employee Health Promotion project with 2010LegaciesNow.

Convention

The Committee reviewed the final results of the 2005 Delegate Evaluations, including Delegate Comments and Municipal Marketplace ratings. The Committee also began planning for the 2006 Convention in Victoria by discussing the theme, program, work plans, budgets and other details.

The Executive approved the following Committee directions:

- Provide a reminder note on Convention registration envelopes advising delegates to request their pre-ordered special meals from catering staff during meal functions.
- Approved the preliminary Convention program time allocations, clinics, workshops and numbers of pre-conference sessions.

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- That the preliminary 2006 Convention budget and fees be:
 - Member registration fee be \$355;
 - Non-member registration fee be \$445;
 - Provincial Government meeting support fee at \$90; and
 - Sponsorship goal of \$140,000.

Community Safety

The Committee had a presentation on a 211 calling number for social services and was advised that briefings on the 211 initiative announced by the Premier at the 2005 UBCM Convention were being offered to all area associations. Based on the recent Auditor General's report, the Committee will be following up with the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General and RCMP "E" Division to discuss improved accountability and issues related to the delivery of police services. Planning for a Crime Prevention and Community Safety Conference has been initiated. The Committee also reviewed a number of information reports.

First Nations Relations

The Committee received an update on treaty negotiations, new legal developments with respect to First Nations consultation and a number of other ongoing policy areas.

The Executive approved the following Committee directions:

- With respect to the report entitled Treaty Settlement Land: The Fiscal Impacts on Local Governments, UBCM continue to research local government concerns and provide a supplementary report to the First Nations Relations Committee at the May Executive meeting.
- UBCM pursue the development of a Protocol Agreement with the First Nations Leadership Council on the basis that any Protocol will be subject to approval by the Executive and membership consultation.
- Continue to monitor important First Nation related legal developments that could potentially impact local governments.

- Pursue the development of three Community to Community Connect newsletter editions in the 2006/2007 fiscal year, if funding is approved.
- Organize a presentation on the Walk for Reconciliation for the next Committee meeting.
- Pursue a meeting with the Honourable Tom Christensen, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation to receive an update on the New Relationship Initiative.

Resolutions

The Resolutions Committee met to review the 2006 resolutions timeline and Committee terms of reference and to discuss delegate feedback on resolutions sessions at the 2005 Convention. The following motions were adopted:

- Gold Star resolutions criteria will be amended to include the requirement that resolution enactments must be stand-alone clauses and that resolutions must have been submitted to the relevant Area Association prior to their submission to UBCM.
- Staff will undertake further research on the issue of resolutions and policy session attendance, and will present this information to both the Resolutions Committee and the Convention Committee at the next Executive meeting.
- A Special Resolution to amend the 1982 Special Resolution on Handling of Resolutions will be put to the 2006 Convention in order to enable non-sponsors to remove resolutions from the B1 and B3 blocks for individual consideration. UBCM Conference Rules and Procedures to be amended accordingly.

Police Costs Task Force

The Task Force has written to the Solicitor General to ask him to publicly confirm if the provincial government intends to implement the recovery of police costs from small communities and rural areas beginning in 2007. If so, the Task Force has set out a number of information disclosure requests to be followed up with information sessions with affected members.