

Highlights of the February 1 - 2, 2007 UBCM Executive Meeting

The Executive held its second regular meeting, which included nine committee meetings. The Executive also met with Ministers Chong and Thorpe.

EXECUTIVE DECIDES

- recommended that the Minister pursue a number of the recommendations of the **Community Opportunities Task Force**.
- will continue to pursue the results of the review of **BC Transit** finance and governance.
- were advised to expect a release by the Ministry of Attorney General of a "Green Paper" review of **limitation periods** (including the 30-year ultimate limitation period UBCM and MIA have recommended be reduced to 10 years).
- noted that government has responded positively to the UBCM Executive Special Resolution on **slope stability** (new Building Code standard).
- were advised that the provincial Throne Speech will be February 13 and the Budget February 20. **Legislation** of interest to local government will include resort municipality finance and governance, multi-phase developments and changes to the *Police Act* to implement the new Small Community and Electoral Area police tax.
- reports suggest new **federal infrastructure** policies will be unveiled in the March Federal Budget.
- were advised that an information package on the **TILMA** agreement is being finalized for distribution to members. Discussions with the Ministry will be continued.
- approved some directions for staff to pursue with working groups on the **Modernization of the Building Code** process. Consistent Code compliance and enforcement and consistent Code application and competency are some of the topics being considered. A discussion paper should be released as part of a wider consultation in March.
- rezoning of **Municipal House** property is proceeding to public hearing.
- Presidents Committee will undertake a full review and updating of internal Executive operational policies.
- made **appointments** to the BC Conservation Lands Forums, BC & Yukon Hotel Association 2% Hotel Tax Working Group and Best Practices Determination Committees, BC Fire Chiefs Working Group (governance, etc.), Judgment of Inquiry Leadership Group (recommendations of a coroner's inquiry into the death of a volunteer firefighter).
- supported a request to FCM to amend its policies to allow BC Transit to access **Green Funds** (as allowed under Gas Tax and the Public Transit Agreement).
- planning a number of **conferences** during 2007: environment, RCMP contract renewal mandate development, Local Government Leadership Academy, Treaty Negotiations – final agreements, group benefits (for staff administrators of UBCM group benefit program), crime prevention (tentative).
- will write the Minister responsible for the Provincial Emergency Program and the federal government to express concern about the pending **flood situation** and the need to become more active in preparing for 2007 spring floods.
- received a presentation from ADM Dale Wall on options to complete the doubling of **regional district grants** and supported one option.
- were advised of the first meeting of the **Local Government Leadership Academy** Board and plans for 2007 programming – to include June 2007 Leadership Forum program launch and subsequent roll-out of three-year program cycle at 2007 Convention.

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

- endorsed resolution B39 – Public Notification of Gravel Pits.
- referred resolution B46 – Resource Based Communities in Crisis back to sponsor for rework/re-submission in 2007.
- were advised Local Government Program Services announced a new round of **Seniors Dialogue grants**, as well as a call for proposals under the **Seniors in Communities Pilot Project** program. The strong interest in **Emergency Planning grant** opportunities in 2007 was also considered noteworthy.
- will write Minister Falcon to express concerns about the lack of increased **provincial funding for transit** and to remind the Minister of the Province's commitments under the Gas Tax Agreement.
- reviewed a report on the results of the **regional district survey** conducted at the 2006 UBCM Convention and directed that results be conveyed to members with a request for feedback on the general nature of intended follow-up.

COMMITTEES

PRESIDENTS COMMITTEE

A range of recommendations were approved:

- will make an offer to renew UBCM's Richmond office lease at the current location.
- will continue with plans to meet with the Ministry of Community Services to discuss the relationship between the new Green Cities awards and the existing Community Excellence Awards.
- with respect to Resolutions Referred to the Executive:
 - on B70 - Fuel Management and Wildfire Plan, the Presidents Committee will seek a meeting with the Minister of Forests.
 - on A6 - Community Methamphetamine Response Funding Program, the Committee will seek a meeting with the Solicitor General to evaluate the Crystal Meth programs.
- will raise the idea of developing a special session for EA Directors outside of Convention with the Local Government Leadership Academy and encourage electoral area directors to assess the opportunity to meet at the BC Rural Communities Forum.
- adopted an action plan on **affordable housing** based on an Implementation Group being established to work on the initial ideas and bring forward additional suggestions at the next meeting. UBCM 2006/2007 Work Program amended to add "affordable housing" as a priority.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Community Economic Development Committee discussed several key policy issues and made the following recommendations to the Executive for action:

- will respond to the **log export review**, advising of UBCM's policy position on log exports, acknowledging the work undertaken by the consultants and indicating UBCM's support for provincial and federal government assistance in working with communities through the transition.
- will advise the membership of the **proposed new Fisheries Act**, solicit member feedback and prepare a report/submission to the Minister based on the input received.
- will undertake to renew the MOU on **Offshore Oil and Gas** with the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources for a two-year term.
- will seek clarification from the Province as to how emergency funds can be accessed; and will determine what the federal and provincial criteria are for accessing **Mountain Pine Beetle funds** on private lands.

ENVIRONMENT

The Environment Committee discussed several emerging policy and regulatory issues, including contaminated sites, the *Environmental Management Act*, the Sewerage System Regulation, the Riparian Areas Regulation, and approved the following directions:

- UBCM draft a submission to the CCME identifying both local government issues with the Canada-wide municipal wastewater effluent strategy and its preference for not identifying implementation timelines until funding mechanisms and options have been defined.

- UBCM await the results of the Sewerage System Regulation survey and working group prior to making any recommendations on resolutions B103 and B104.
- UBCM engage in consultation with the Ministry of Health on the management of small water systems and options, if any, for point of entry/point of use systems for small numbers of connections.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

The Committee focused on key priorities and made recommendations to the Executive as follows:

- with respect to the Select Standing Committee on Health – **Combating Childhood Obesity Strategy**, UBCM will express support to the Minister of Health for the key recommendations involving local governments and will pursue the recommendations through on-going activities.
- evaluation of Round 1 pilot projects under the **Community Health Promotion Fund** are proceeding and UBCM will pursue partnership with BC Healthy Communities to host a joint fall conference.
- will work with partners on the terms of reference for a **Community Health and Food Access Guide** for local governments, which will provide information on local government roles and draw from effective BC practices.
- Healthy Communities Committee to meet with the Leadership Council to raise the continuing concerns of UBCM members with respect to **health authorities/regional hospital districts/local government relations**, with a session to be scheduled at the 2007 UBCM Convention to discuss mechanisms to improve health authority consultation and communication with RHDs and individual local governments.

CONVENTION

The Committee reviewed final results of the 2006 Convention, as well as initial planning items determined for 2007. The following key directives were approved by the Executive:

- 50% surcharge will be moved to three weeks prior to Convention. Registrations are considered closed within one week of Convention. However, those received within one week and on-site will be processed on-site and pay a surcharge of 75%.

- will continue to produce the **Daily News** and will implement systems to enable better visibility of the News to delegates at Convention.
- a policy guide on accepting "**external group events**" at Convention, and a fee schedule to recover costs for these events, will be implemented.
- 2007 Convention theme will be "**Climates of Change**", with a focus on the fact that all communities face changes in all areas of responsibility - the environment, the political climate, the socio-economic climate and the climate of relationships, such as with First Nations.
- **Municipal Marketplace** will be open a total of 10 hours - Wednesday from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Committee met with Kevin Begg, Assistant Deputy Minister and Director of Police Services, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General and a number of ministry staff to discuss RCMP contract renewal, PRIME, RCMP accountability, development of an integrated justice model and the status of proposed federal funding for own-force police communities.

The Executive approved the following actions:

- seek more information about the costs of **PRIME** to local government and provide this information to the members.
- work with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General to organize a meeting with local government representatives or undertake other measures to identify issues that need to be addressed in **RCMP contract negotiations**.
- write the federal and provincial government supporting the need for stable funding for the **Fraser River Debris Trap**.
- meet with Deputy Commissioner & Commanding Officer Gary Bass, RCMP "E" Division to discuss implementation of Community Performance Plans and development of the integrated justice model in BC.
- meet with provincial government staff to discuss development of a provincial board to **integrate justice issues** and determine what action may be

required to ensure local government involvement in the process.

- meet with Ministry of Transportation to discuss **highway standards**, the approach to letting highway maintenance contracts and the performance of these contracts.

FIRST NATIONS RELATIONS

The Committee focused on key policy issues and activities, and the following recommendations to the Executive were approved:

- continue work on UBCM analysis of **final treaty agreements** initialled in 2006, including referral to Treaty Advisory Committees for comment, making a final report available to UBCM members and organizing a conference to be held for UBCM members.
- forward request from First Nations Summit to develop a program for First Nation band administrators in partnership with UBCM to the Local Government Leadership Academy for consideration in program development.
- survey TACs on their experiences around sharing confidential treaty information, with the goal of reaching an agreement with the Province on the sharing of confidential information.
- with regard to the **Community to Community (C2C) Forum Program**, that:
 - UBCM write MCS and INAC to request \$70,000 in funding from each (total of \$140,000) for the 2007/2008 C2C Forum Program; and
 - as part of the annual reporting requirements, evaluate 2006/07 C2C Forum Program and make recommendations for administration of the 2007/08 Program, with a view to implementing the recommendations.
- work with FNS, MCS, MARR and INAC in developing a best practices guide to capture the experiences and successes of local governments and First Nations who have held Community to Community Forums.
- approve allocation of \$100,000 funding from MARR to TACs and local governments in treaty negotiations, based on a principled approach.

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

The Committee reviewed its terms of reference and timeline for the coming year. Delegate feedback, comments and correspondence items from the 2006 Convention resolution sessions were discussed, as were suggestions for improving resolutions sessions for 2007. The Executive approved the following actions:

- Committee to respond, in writing, to each of the five pieces of correspondence received on resolutions issues.
- Staff to prepare a member notice and a section for the March UBCM News reviewing resolutions drafting and submission procedures and discussing the Committee's work in reviewing and categorizing resolutions.
- Changes in Municipal Marketplace hours to be monitored at the 2007 Convention for effect on resolutions session attendance.
- Coloured voting cards to be produced for the 2007 Convention.

TOURISM TASK FORCE

The Task Force was established to make recommendations on Phase 2 of the Community Tourism Funds. The Task Force reviewed the results of recent member surveys experiences with Phase 1 and ideas for Phase 2. Over 80% of respondents recommended the entitlement-phased approach of Phase 1 be repeated in Phase 2. The Executive approved the recommendations that:

- the entitlement based approach of Phase 1 be the basis of Phase 2;
- the remaining \$12.5 million be allocated to Phase 2; and
- the Phase 1 allocation formula be updated and reviewed and a revised application guide prepared.

The Task Force Chair will meet with the Minister of Tourism, Sport and the Arts to review Phase 1 and the direction for Phase 2. The Task Force is expected to meet to review the revised material at the beginning of March. In a related matter, the Executive approved enforcing the Phase 1 deadline of March 31 unless an extension had been applied for, there is a reasonable rationale for why and how long, and the extension has been approved.

DELEGATIONS

EXECUTIVE MEETS WITH THE HONOURABLE RICK THORPE, MINISTER OF SMALL BUSINESS AND REVENUE AND MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR DEREGULATION

Minister Thorpe spoke about business licensing. The Small Business Roundtable identified federal and municipal regulations as one of the top four barriers to doing business in BC and the Community Opportunities Task Force report identified regional business licences as a strategic opportunity. The Province is planning to have a harmonized business licence framework in place by 2008 and is putting together a working group to advise on the design of the framework.

In response to questions from the Executive, Minister Thorpe clarified that the licensing would apply to all sizes of business. He stressed that the initiative is about streamlining and would not be about increasing costs or taking revenue from local governments. The Minister advised that many of the details of the program and its logistics would be determined by the working group. Finally, he advised that the Province was currently attempting to negotiate a five-year agreement with the federal government to expand BizPaL around the province.

EXECUTIVE MEETS WITH THE HONOURABLE IDA CHONG, MINISTER OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR SENIORS' AND WOMENS' ISSUES

Minister Chong advised on several different areas.

Regional Governance

The Minister advised that regional governance will continue to be a priority, going beyond the Task Force on Community Opportunities recommendations to encourage more regional thinking and looking at how regions can work better. Ways to align regional planning with national and provincial initiatives will be explored. The report from the RD session and survey at Convention will be circulated to members with a letter from the Minister and President Binnie.

Green City Awards

The Minister advised that the Green City Awards will be cash awards and will be given out at the 2007 UBCM Convention. Award details will be announced in the near future.

Annual Grants

Traffic Fine Revenue

Since 100% Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing was announced in 2004, the total returned has grown from \$10 million to \$50 million in 2006/07. The grants were given unconditionally to communities, but with the objective of contributing to community safety. Of the 71 communities who received funding, all but two have submitted reports. The majority of

the funds have gone to policing, funding an additional 450 officers throughout the province. The Minister requested UBCM thoughts on how this program can be improved, perhaps through applying any funds over a specific limit to a pool to support innovative approaches to community safety or integration of services between communities.

Small Communities Grants

The small communities grants will double by 2009-2010; this year the total amount was 1.5 times what was received last year. Because of changes to population and assessments, some communities may no longer qualify if they grow above a certain population size.

Affordable Housing

UBCM would like to work with the Minister on an "Implementation Group" to look at tools and practices to achieve market housing affordability in the province.

Community Opportunities Task Force

The Community Opportunities Task Force workshop received the highest ratings for a workshop at Convention, showing the interest of delegates. The recommendations in 3(b) were presented to the Minister.