

Highlights of the UBCM Executive Meeting held April 9 ~ 11, 2008

Every two years the UBCM Executive takes their spring meeting on the road to one of the Area Association meetings. For the first time, UBCM Executive members were able to participate at the AVICC conference at Bear Mountain in Langford over the April 11-13 weekend.

However, prior to attending AVICC, board members met in Victoria and held their usual slate of eight committee meetings and quarterly Executive meeting. An additional six Cabinet minister meetings were held, an MLA/Deputy Minister networking event was hosted and members had an opportunity to attend Question Period at the legislature. As part of the Friday Executive meeting, members met with the Honourable Ida Chong, Minister of Community Services. Following the meeting, the Minister joined President Gimse and Executive members at the "cement pouring" ceremony for the new Municipal House that is presently under construction.

EXECUTIVE DECIDES

- Building Canada Fund - were advised that Gas Tax Extension agreement of \$1 billion had been signed. Staff were gathering information on steps needed to implement the federal promise to make the Gas Tax a permanent program.

The President reported on a positive meeting with Minister Kevin Falcon that included discussion of a "carve-out" for the municipalities in the Major Infrastructure Program component; cost-sharing of projects in the Major Infrastructure Program; potential for local government participation in the development of a BC infrastructure plan; and participation in the Infrastructure Framework Agreement Oversight Committee. The Executive directed that the UBCM now shift priority to securing the Communities Component Agreement of the Building Canada Fund.

- received confirmation from Minister Thorpe that assessment averaging will remain a voluntary option for municipalities and will not become mandatory.
- advised that the new Public Health Act had been introduced into the legislature and were informed of the latest information as to the implications of the new Act for local governments (see separate release on new Public Health Act). The Executive will be communicating with government on its approaches to dealing with conflicting local and provincial land use objectives.
- reviewed the elements of the provincial budget, Speech from the Throne and an overview of legislation introduced to date including the local elections amendments.

- advised that UBCM will be consulted as Ministry of Environment considers development of a landfill gas capture regulation.
- received a report on the second annual training event offered by the Local Government Leadership Academy Forum – overall well received by 81 registrants with a rating of 4.6/5 and plans are underway for 2009 newly elected seminar series.
- received a status report on the current provincially funded programs administered by UBCM under the Local Government Program Services and the federally funded Gas Tax/Public Transit Management Services, also administered by UBCM's Victoria Operations.
- received a presentation from Peter Adams on the history and background of revenue sharing programs and how unconditional and conditional grant programs have evolved over the years.
- received an update on TILMA discussions between UBCM, the Province, legal counsel and the two Alberta municipal associations and sought confirmation of next steps.
- advised of the status of work on the Green Communities Committee including the establishment of three working groups (see separate sidebar for working group membership).
- reviewed a request from the Integrated Cadastral Initiative related to the establishment of AddressBC which has been referred to Presidents Committee for final decision.

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- received a summary and draft recommendations for follow-up to the provincial responses to the 2007 UBCM resolutions.
- advised that the new Housing Statutes Amendments Act had been introduced into the legislature and were informed of the implications of the new Act for local governments.
- received correspondence from Finance Minister Taylor in response to our enquiries related to the new carbon tax in which she indicates that its application is intentionally broad-based and that its revenue neutrality is not intended to apply on a sector by sector basis.
- were advised of the establishment of the Farm Assessment review, co-chaired by Mayor Frank Leonard, District of Saanich and Blair Lekstrom, MLA for Peace River South that will report back to government by July 31, 2009.

COMMITTEES

Presidents

The Presidents Committee held separate meetings with the Honourable Carole Taylor, Minister of Finance and the Honourable Kevin Falcon, Minister of Transportation.

Items discussed at the meeting with Minister Taylor included the new carbon tax and its impacts on local governments, fiscal imbalance resolutions from the membership and local government revenue sources.

Items discussed with Minister Falcon are identified in the Building Canada section noted above.

The Committee also received updates on the redesign of the UBCM website, status of the MOU with the Phillippine Leagues of Cities and Municipalities, and received a status report on the construction of the new Municipal House in Victoria.

The Committee made the following recommendations:

- will establish a Task Force to advance issues around Housing and Homelessness comprising both Executive Committee members (Healthy Communities Committee) and selected participants from outside organizations (linkage to FCM) and potential resources from the provincial and federal government; and that the terms of reference for the Task Force be directed at activities that are action oriented that will address existing gaps in policy work. The Task Force will have a defined timeline within which to complete its activities; and
- confirmed that the theme for the 2008 Partnerships category of the Community Excellence Awards will be First Nations.

Environment

The Committee met with Joan Hesketh, Deputy Minister of Environment; Graham Whitmarsh, Head, Climate Action Secretariat; John Ward, Operations Manager, Contaminated

Sites; Chris Ord, Manager, Community Waste Management; and Penny Lloyd, Senior Policy Advisor. The Committee raised local government concerns over the contaminated sites profile process, including the absence of local government indemnification and the inability of local governments to require timely and effective remediation for onsite and offsite contamination. The Committee also sought clarification on the scope and application of the forthcoming Landfill Gas Capture Regulation. It outlined the cost implications of landfill gas capture systems, acknowledged that regulation of landfill gas capture would prevent the sale of offsets, and sought clarification on where landfills would fit into the Province's proposed cap and trade emissions system.

The Committee made recommendations to:

- authorize the UBCM President to sign the tripartite protocol agreement on the Riparian Areas Regulation;
- have UBCM review its internal operations and examine options for reducing its carbon footprint with the goal of becoming carbon neutral;
- have Graham Whitmarsh, Head of the Climate Action Secretariat, present on the Province's climate change agenda at the next UBCM Convention;
- write a letter to the Minister of Environment acknowledging that plastic bags remains a key issue for local governments and encouraging the Province to take action; and
- advise the BC Environment Industry Association that it should approach the Area Associations with a proposal to host hazardous waste workshops.

Healthy Communities

The Committee met and discussed a number of matters and made the following recommendations:

- endorse 2007 Resolution B192 - Labeling of Genetically

Modified Food and take no further action at this time on B187 - Blood Samples Act;

- broaden the scope of the Emergency Medical Assistance Fund to address on the ground basic training and allocate a portion of any new funding for this training;
- continue research into the potential effects of the Tripartite Aboriginal Health Plan on regional hospital district funding; and
- share information gathered on the interpretation and application of the Food Premises Regulation and Guideline for the Sale of Food at Temporary Food Markets on community events such as bake sales, potluck dinners and farmer's market sales. In addition it was recommended that that the Green Communities Committee ensure that the food security issues raised by the sale of local foods at Farmers' Markets are included in its review of community gardens, in light of concerns about local production and the preparation and sale of foods in ways that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Community Economic Development

The Committee met and received an overview of BC's bioenergy strategy and Agricultural plan as well as updates on the renewed Fisheries Act, Single Business Licence pilot project and status of Site C consultations.

The Committee made the following recommendations to the Executive:

- continue participation in the RV Park Development working group as report implementation moves ahead;
- seek clarification on elements of the Bioenergy Strategy including the process for identifying community pilot projects, potential for project clustering and funds allocated for biodiesel production;
- seek clarification on the establishment of agriculture advisory committees at the local government level and support for agriculture industry as identified in the Agricultural Plan;
- circulate information to the membership on the Recreation Trails Strategy for BC and provide input as necessary; and
- correspond with Minister Bell directly on issues related to the bioenergy strategy and the agriculture plan.

Convention

The Convention Committee met with representatives from

the Ministry of Community Services to discuss the Province's involvement in the 2008 Convention and also worked on further details of the program.

The following actions were endorsed:

- secure a comedian and dance band for Thursday evening banquet entertainment;
- that the Convention theme be: "BC Moments: Cool... Warm...Smart";
- organize the following Partner's Programs:
 - South Okanagan Wine Tour
 - Kettle Valley Hike
 - Kettle Valley Train
 - Antique Shop Tour
 - Osoyoos Nk'mip Cultural Centre; and
- confirm space at the Vancouver Convention Centre for September 25 – 30, 2011.

Community Safety

The Committee met with David Morhart, Deputy Solicitor General and Deputy Minister of Public Safety, and Kevin Begg, Assistant Deputy Minister, Policing and Community Safety Branch, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, and received an update on the following: the RCMP contract discussions; the new federal Police Recruitment Fund; the status of the pawnshop/scrap metal issue; funding for flood hazard management; implementation of the new RCMP Community Safety Officer program; and the new provincial crime prevention strategy being developed.

The Committee also met with Attorney General Wally Oppal, Deputy Attorney General Allan Seckel and Alison McPhail, Executive Lead, Criminal Justice Reform Secretariat who provided an update on the implementation of community courts, development of new provincial crime prevention strategy, the Bylaw Adjudication Court system and the comprehensive review of sentencing in British Columbia that is underway.

The following actions were endorsed:

- write the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General thanking them for the new Civil Forfeiture Crime Remediation and Crime Prevention grant funding and suggest that they consider the development of a simpler application process; and
- write the federal government requesting that it match provincial government funding for flood hazard management.

First Nations Relations

The First Nations Relations Committee met with the Honourable Mike de Jong, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, to discuss local governments' role in the Province's New Relationship activities. The Committee communicated local governments' interests in being involved in New Relationship negotiations. These interests include consultation, a flexible structure for local governments to determine themselves how they would like to participate in negotiations, exchanging confidential (treaty) information among local governments, and funding for local governments to participate in negotiations.

The Committee made recommendations in regard to the following:

- prepare a discussion paper on the issues to be addressed at the Common (treaty) Table with those First Nations who

are signatories to the Unity Protocol;

- seek preparation of a legal synopsis of the BC Supreme Court ruling in *Tsilhqot'in First Nation v. BC.*;
- in regard to the New Relationship, staff to draft an MOU with MARR for consideration based on identified UBCM interests; and
- request to MARR Minister that UBCM have the opportunity to provide input and comment into the drafting of the proposed Indigenous Nations Recognition Act.

Regional District Task Force

The Committee reported that it had met with Deputy Minister Dale Wall and Acting Assistant Deputy Minister Gary Paget on two occasions. Work to date has centred around articulating the problem statement and identifying various potential strategies that could be pursued.

DELEGATION

MEETING BETWEEN HONOURABLE IDA CHONG, MINISTER OF COMMUNITY SERVICES, AND THE UBCM EXECUTIVE

Minister Chong attended the Executive meeting with Deputy Minister, Dale Wall. The Minister discussed various aspects of the Build Canada Program, including the Communities Component.

With respect to the UBCM's 2007 Green Communities policy paper, the Minister provided a written response to UBCM. She indicated that some of the recommendations by UBCM may have been addressed in the recently introduced green legislation.

The Minister was advised that the Environment Committee had met with Ministry of Environment staff on the proposed landfill gas recapture regulation. Further discussions will take place between UBCM and ministry staff, to ensure that the interests of local governments are identified and can be taken into consideration as the ministry drafts its intentions paper.

President Gimse advised the Minister that the Presidents Committee had met with Finance Minister Taylor in Victoria to discuss the recently announced carbon tax, noting that some UBCM members had expressed concerns that the tax was not revenue neutral for local governments. Minister Chong confirmed that the carbon tax was not meant to be revenue neutral for local governments. She indicated that many local governments have signed Climate Action Charters indicating their commitment to reducing greenhouse gases. She confirmed that no financial assistance would be forthcoming to local governments to offset the impact of the carbon tax.

The UBCM Executive indicated that it is reviewing research work done on the fiscal imbalance and once that work was complete, they would wish to have further discussions with the Minister.

At the conclusion of the meeting Minister Chong, UBCM President Gimse and fellow Executive members departed for the new Municipal House site for the "cement pouring" event.

Joint Provincial~UBCM Green Communities Committee Working Groups

Carbon Neutral Working Group

Nichola Wade, Co-Chair, Executive Director, Carbon Neutral Operations, Climate Action Secretariat
 Jared Wright, Co-Chair, Senior Policy Analyst, UBCM
 Russ Fuoco, Director of Planning Services, District of Saanich
 Ali Ergrudenler, Senior Engineer, Policy and Planning, Metro Vancouver
 Ted Battiston, Manager of Sustainability Initiatives, Resort Municipality of Whistler
 Dwayne Kalynchuk, Environmental Services General Manager, Capital Regional District
 Sean Pander, Climate Protection Program Manager, City of Vancouver
 Ruth Malli, City Manager, Town of Ladysmith
 Liam Edwards, Infrastructure Resource Officer, Minister of Community Services
 Erik Kaye, Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources
 Bernie Gaudet, Accommodation and Real Estate Services, Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services
 Brendan McCombs, A/Manager Executive Operations, Ministry of Environment
 Ted Sheldon, Prime Member, Climate Change Policy Analyst, Ministry of Environment
 Tatiana Robertson, Senior Policy Analyst, Intergovernmental Relations and Planning Division, Ministry of Community Services

Small Communities Working Group

Gary Paget, Co-Chair, A/Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Community Services
 Gary Maclsaac, Co-Chair, Executive Director, UBCM
 Brenda Gibson, Co-Chair (Alternate), General Manager, UBCM
 Shawn Boven, Manager, Public Works, City of Merritt
 Emanuel Machado, Director of Corporate Planning & Sustainable Community Development, City of Dawson Creek
 Jason Niles, Assistant Planner, District of Ucluelet
 Tanya Turner, Municipal Planner, City of Quesnel
 Larisa Hutcheson, Senior manager, Operations & Local Services, Capital Regional District
 Jim Gustafson, Chief Administrative Officer, Central Kootenay Regional District
 Michael Zbarsky, Infrastructure Resource Officer, Ministry of Community Services
 Steve Anderson, Executive Director, Public Outreach and Strategic Engagement, Climate Action Secretariat
 Ted Sheldon, Prime Member (Donna Sanford as needed), Climate Change Policy Analyst/Sr. Climate Change Policy Analyst, Ministry of Environment

Representative TBA, BC Transit

Michael Wilson, P. Eng., Community Energy Association
 Danielle Lukovich, Senior Planner, Ministry of Community Services
 Kerri Klein, Regional Facilitator, Vancouver Island, BC Healthy Communities
 Scott Bailey, Manager, Brownfield and Program Development; Project Director, Brownfields Renewal Strategy, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

Urban Working Group

Alan Osborne, Co-Chair, Executive Director, Intergovernmental Relations and Planning, Ministry of Community Services
 Richard Taylor, Co-Chair, General Manager, UBCM Victoria Operations, UBCM
 Heather Wornell, Senior Environmental Planner, Metro Vancouver
 Sean Pander, Climate Protection Program Manager, City of Vancouver
 Jane Pickering, Director of Planning, City of Maple Ridge
 Kim Fowler, Director of Planning, City of Port Coquitlam
 Ron Mattiussi, City Manager, City of Kelowna
 Susan Haid, Manager, Sustainable Community Development, District of North Vancouver
 Rejan Farley, Manager, Intergovernmental Initiatives, Ministry of Community Services
 Brian Mills, Director, Strategic Planning & Policy, Translink
 Steve Anderson, Executive Director, Public Outreach and Strategic Engagement, Climate Action Secretariat
 Tara Tompkins, Infrastructure Resource Officer, Ministry of Community Services
 Ted Sheldon, Prime Member (Donna Sanford as needed), Climate Change Policy Analyst/Sr. Climate Change Policy Analyst, Ministry of Environment
 Kevin Volk, Manager, Strategic Planning and Policy, Climate Action Program, Ministry of Transportation
 Deborah Curran, Environmental Law Centre, Faculty of Law, University of Victoria
 Scott Bailey, Manager, Brownfield and Program Development; Project Director, Brownfields Renewal Strategy, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

Other Resource Support:

Todd Pugh, Executive Director, CivicInfo
 Lawrence Alexander, Special Advisor, Climate Action Secretariat

Consultants:

Alex Boston, Holland-Barrs
 Mark Holland, Holland Barrs

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