

Highlights of the UBCM Executive Meeting held March 12 - 13, 2009

While this was the second meeting for the Executive this year, it was the first meeting for board members appointed since the December 2008 meeting. The President welcomed Acting Directors at Large: Mayor Malcolm Brodie, Richmond and Mayor Christopher Causton, Oak Bay as well as Councillor Kerry Jang, City of Vancouver representative and Councillor Barbara Steele, Metro Vancouver representative.

A total of eight committee meetings were held in addition to the regular Executive meeting that also included three delegations from; the Farm Assessment Review Panel; the Minister of Community Development, the Honourable Kevin Krueger; and the Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, the Honourable Mike de Jong.

General Executive decisions:

- reviewed the status of the **annual work plan** as proposed in July 2008.
- received reports on the provincial Throne Speech and Budget as well as details around the federal budget, including the new **Infrastructure Stimulus Fund**.
- endorsed an election readiness strategy in the lead-up to the provincial election.
- received a report on the status of the **Building Canada Fund** and a proposed cost sharing arrangement for eligible flood mitigation projects.
- supported **legal funding assistance** to North

Pender Island (Islands Trust) v. Hunt et al

- seek an exemption for local governments to the **Health Care Costs Recovery Act** and if unsuccessful, work with the Municipal Insurance Association to establish the terms and conditions for setting a fixed payment
- continue to work with the Building and Safety Policy Branch to address some of the ongoing concerns identified in the implementation of **6-storey** wood-framed construction.
- monitor the implementation of the new **Labour Mobility Act** provisions.
- continue to monitor the new **police tax** and assist the Ministry with implementation.
- continue to consult with local governments on the **landfill gas capture regulation**.
- monitor the new licensing requirements for **home inspectors**.
- received a report on the status of the new **Municipal House** construction – Victoria staff will be moving into the new building in April 2009.

Welcome to UBCM's Newest Member!

The Executive is pleased to welcome the Nisga'a Village of Gitwinksihlkw to the UBCM. The Village made an application for UBCM membership which was considered and approved by the Executive at the March meeting. We wish to welcome Chief Councillor Peter Lambright and fellow Village councillors to the UBCM.

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

- 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.

- confirmed the following additional committee appointments:

Seniors Healthy Living Network

- Councillor Murry Krause

BC Hydro Electricity Conservation and Efficiency Advisory Committee

- Councillor Noreen Guenther

Pacific Salmon Fishery Adjustment Program

- Mayor Charlie Cornfield, Campbell River

- Mayor Jack Mussallem, Prince Rupert

Land Title Survey Authority Stakeholder Advisory Committee

- Chris Nation, District of Saanich, Municipal Lawyer

BC Used Oil Management Association

- Jared Wright, UBCM

Partnership Committee on Agriculture and the Environment

- Director Wendy Bales, Fraser Valley RD

- Janet Demarcke, City of Chilliwack

[A full listing of Executive Committees is highlighted in a separate sidebar.]

- reviewed legislation introduced during this session of the Legislature

- received an update on proposed **2009 conferences** noting that the Environment conference has been postponed; Province-wide C2C Forum may be postponed to fall 2009 unless funding commitments are confirmed; and the Electoral Area Directors Forum has been confirmed for June 26.

- received a report on the fourth technical mission in December 2008 to the Philippines as part of UBCM's MOU between FCM, the League of Cities and the Leagues of Municipalities.

COMMITTEES

Presidents

The Committee discussed a variety of issues and the Executive endorsed recommendations on the following:

- review policy related to member visits with a view to including Metro Vancouver and Capital region members within the annual 25% membership target;
- pursue suitable sponsorships for the following Excellence Awards categories: Best Practices, Annual reporting; Leadership & Innovation; and Partnerships. Health was identified as the focus for the Partnerships category;
- undertake outreach efforts to ensure that a portion of the new federal infrastructure funds are available to local governments;
- conduct a survey of members to determine the interest in establishing a fuel-purchasing program for members; and
- respond to the recommendations in Fire Services Model Project based on the feedback provided from members and the Executive to date.

Convention

The Convention Committee discussed final results of the 2008 Delegate Evaluations, which included a thorough look at ratings and comments – a copy of which will be forwarded to the City of Penticton. Future Convention locations and related policies were reviewed. The basic program for 2009 was determined and initial discussion was held regarding the theme, catering, Welcome Reception details and Partner's Program options. The Clinic and Workshop application was approved and will be posted on the UBCM website in May. A number of actions were endorsed to support planning of the upcoming Convention in Vancouver, including the following registration fees:

- Member registration fee: \$405
- Non-member registration fee: \$510

Environment

The Committee received a delegation from Richard Bereti, Principal, Harper Gray LLP on the Contaminated Sites Regulation and the interim site

profile process for contaminated sites. Mr. Harper provided an overview of the position of industry and contaminated sites approved professionals in regards to the Regulation and site profile process, while Committee members noted local government concerns around promoting timely and effective remediation of contaminated sites.

The Committee made the following recommendations to the Executive:

- engage in consultation with affected local governments on the draft Riparian Areas Regulation Variance Protocol, and communicate any concerns with the Protocol to the Ministry of Environment and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans;
- engage in consultation with local governments affected by the Landfill Gas Management Regulation, and identify any implementation challenges that may need to be addressed by the Province;
- consult with the British Columbia Product Stewardship Council on whether twine and agricultural plastics should be prioritized for inclusion in product stewardship programs, and if supported by the Council, draft a letter of support to the Ministry of Environment requesting said inclusion;
- consult with the British Columbia Product Stewardship Council and the Municipal Environmental Managers Committee on strategies for encouraging local governments to require recycling when a group wants to book a park or hold an event;
- monitor the work of the Collaborative Watershed Initiative, and identify local government representatives for participation in the Initiative's activities where appropriate; and
- host an environment conference in Spring 2010 and work with the federal and provincial government on a funding and participatory framework in 2009.

First Nations Relations

Much of the Committee's discussion focused on the proposed legislation that would formally recognize Aboriginal rights and title. Further discussions on this matter are highlighted in the delegation with Minister de Jong.

The Executive endorsed the following recommendations:

- circulate the draft UBCM Reponse to the Common Table discussion paper to Treaty Advisory Committees for comment prior to forwarding to the provincial government.
- reiterate our request to Province for treaty adjustment funding for local governments.
- write the Minister of Aboriginal Relations and the Minister of Community Development seeking a response to questions related to the Tseil'Waututh Nation Stewardship Policy
- reviewed and approved all Newly Elected C2C applications received to date.
- work with First Nations Summit to develop a workplan for the next term of UBCM's Protocol agreement with First Nations Summit.
- write the FCM encouraging an MOU between FCM and the federal government to enhance communication with local government on non-treaty initiatives with First Nations that have the potential to impact local government jurisdiction.

Community Economic Development

The Committee discussed a number of resource policy issues related to energy, forestry, aquaculture and the overall economic climate and its impact on communities. The following recommendations were endorsed by the Executive:

- seek feedback from the membership on the 29 recommendations put forward by the Roundtable on Forestry, through Area Associations, with a view to developing a UBCM response to those recommendations for submission to the Minister of Forests;
- gather further information about the BCUC Inquiry into Long Term Transmission Infrastructure and Capacity and consider preparing a submission on behalf of UBCM;
- continue to monitor the consultations related to the Site C proposal; and
- monitor the response of the provincial government to the BC Supreme Court ruling with respect to aquaculture management.

Healthy Communities

The Committee met and received a delegation from Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport staff on two projects related to the Public Health Act (PHA). The first project is a guidance note for local governments and medical health officers, outlining details of the new Act, and what the implications and expectations of them would be. The second proposed initiative is a mental health and substance community plan. The goal of this project would be strengthen the relationship between local governments and regional health authorities on mental health and substance related issues. The Committee made the following recommendations to the Executive as a result of its deliberations:

- request that Ministry staff provide a forum for more dialogue with local governments on the development of the PHA guidance note
- request that the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport undertake a comprehensive consultation on the Mental Health and Substance Community Planning Proposal.
- endorse resolutions B129 (Health Care Facilities), B130 (Ten Year Financial Planning for BC Hospital Facilities), and B132 (Health Capital Funding).
- not endorse resolution B131 (Phased Out Contributions from Regional Hospital Districts for Capital Expenditures)
- accept the monitoring role for the implementation of recommendations in the 2008 Regional Hospital District Cost Sharing report.
- approve the suggested changes in the renewal of the Consultation Agreement on Public Health Concurrent Jurisdiction and approve signing the Agreement in June, following the provincial election.

Community Safety

The Community Safety Committee put forward the following actions for Executive endorsement:

- write the federal and provincial Solicitor General concerning the lack of consultation with local

government on the reforms being considered to the RCMP and the financial costs of these changes;

- develop a policy paper on the RCMP contract and hold a policy session at the 2009 UBCM Convention on the issue; and
- meet with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General staff to discuss local government concerns with the RCMP Contract negotiating process and ways to improve the process.

Resolutions

The Resolutions Committee made the following recommendations to the Executive:

- work with the Convention Committee and support efforts to optimize the physical space in which policy sessions take place by:
 - reducing noise from delegates during plenary sessions, especially towards the back of the room.
 - using visual cues – such as a greater number of display screens, or a screen in each corner of the room – to better orient delegates to the progress and flow of policy sessions;
- prepare a circular to the membership outlining and clarifying the procedures followed for Convention policy sessions; and
- adopt a reporting structure and timeframe for introducing a forthcoming resolutions policy paper to membership and soliciting member feedback.

Regional District Task Force

Chair Hobson reported that the Regional District Task Force had met and explored in greater detail the three issues that were outlined for the members at the 2008 UBCM Convention – Electoral Area Governance; Fringe Area Planning and Servicing Issues; and Crown Land/Regional District Interface. Case studies were presented around each of these issues examining where regional districts had been successful in dealing with the issues and where they had been unsuccessful.

Meeting with Hon. Kevin Krueger, Minister of Community Development

The UBCM Executive met with Honourable Kevin Krueger, Minister of Community Development. This was the Minister's first full meeting with the UBCM Executive since his appointment to the new portfolio. The following issues were discussed during the meeting:

Provincial Grant Programs - President conveyed the concerns expressed by some members around the mandatory reporting requirements that were put into place as part of the Strategic Community Investment Funds (small community, regional district and traffic fine revenues), which have traditionally been unconditional grants. The Minister indicated that reporting requirements had been streamlined and that while the government does not want to create an administrative burden on local governments, these requirements are necessary to ensure continuous funding during challenging economic times.

Federal Budget and Infrastructure Acceleration - President indicated UBCM's interest in ensuring that a fixed percentage (minimum of 50%) of the additional federal infrastructure funds be earmarked for local government projects. Minister Krueger indicated that the nature of federal programming was only now becoming clear and that therefore the provincial government was not in a position to confirm that a prescribed percentage would be allocated for local government.

Speech from the Throne - UBCM reference - President enquired as to the Province's proposed direction in regard to industrial taxation. The Minister indicated that when the province provides a tax cut, they do not want that cut absorbed by another level of government and sought to engage the UBCM in discussions on the matter further.

Regional District Task Force - Minister indicated support for the ongoing work of the Task Force.

Rural Resource Roads Update - Minister confirmed that funds were being allocated to improving key resource roads and that work would be getting underway as soon as possible. The Task Force on Rural Resource Roads (which includes the UBCM Presidents Committee) will be meeting soon to address longer-term policy matters.

Assessment Freeze - President advised that there was still some concern that the general public might be interpreting the announced assessment freeze as a tax freeze. The Minister indicated that his Ministry has been working to clarify the difference between assessments and tax rates and reiterated the view that the approach taken by the government with respect to 2008 assessments had been successful in substantially reducing potential citizen concerns and assessment appeals.

Meeting with John Rustad, MLA and Mayor Frank Leonard, Co-chairs of the Farm Assessment Review Panel

The UBCM Executive welcomed Farm Assessment Panel co-chairs Mayor Frank Leonard and John Rustad, MLA. Mayor Leonard provided an update on the consultation sessions held by the panel and some of the feedback that it had received to date. John Rustad, MLA indicated that the objective of the review was to develop an assessment process that encouraged farming and ensured that the taxation system was fair. Mr. Rustad stated that

the panel was looking at some challenging issues, such as what the appropriate income threshold level might be for farming and the relationship between local government zoning and the farm classification process. The Executive was informed that the Farm Assessment Review Panel was intending to report back to the government by end of June 2009 with recommendations on how to improve the farm assessment process.

Meeting with the Hon. Mike de Jong, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation

Minister de Jong provided a brief summary of the proposed indigenous recognition act that would formally recognize Aboriginal rights and title in BC. Minister de Jong confirmed with the Executive that the provincial government has no intention of passing this legislation without further extensive consultation with UBCM. To that end, the Minister committed to establishing a process for consulting with local governments.

UBCM issued a separate member release on March 16th reporting out on the meeting with Minister de Jong. For further information please go to www.civicnet.bc.ca under News/Announcements.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

RESOLUTIONS

Mayor Sharon Gaetz, Chair
 Mayor Mary Sjostrom, Vice Chair
 Councillor Barbara Steele
 Mayor Malcolm Brodie
 Mayor Christopher Causton

NOMINATING

- to be established for 2008-2009

UBCM Past President and Area Association
 Representatives (Presidents or their designates)

CONVENTION

Director Susie Gimse, Chair
 Councillor Noreen Guenther, Vice Chair
 Councillor Wesly Graham
 Councillor Kerry Jang

PRESIDENTS COMMITTEE (as established in
 Executive policies)

Chair Robert Hobson, President
 Director Harry Nyce, First Vice President
 Director Susan Gimse, Past President
 Mayor Sharon Gaetz
 Mayor Mary Sjostrom

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Councillor Barbara Steele, Chair
 Councillor Kevin Flynn
 Councillor Sharon Gaetz
 Mayor Malcolm Brodie
 Mayor Christopher Causton

ENVIRONMENT

Director Rhona Martin, Chair
 Director Heath Slee
 Councillor Kevin Flynn
 Mayor Roland Stanke
 Chair Harry Nyce, VP Liaison

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Chair Al Richmond, Chair
 Mayor Roland Stanke, Vice Chair
 Councillor Murry Krause
 Councillor Wesly Graham
 Director Rhona Martin
 Councillor Kerry Jang

FIRST NATIONS RELATIONS

Councillor Corinne Lonsdale, Chair
 Councillor Murry Krause, Vice Chair
 Mayor Barry Janyk
 Chair Harry Nyce, VP Liaison

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mayor Mary Sjostrom, Chair
 Mayor Barry Janyk, Vice Chair
 Director Heath Slee
 Councillor Noreen Guenther
 Councillor Corinne Lonsdale

REGIONAL DISTRICT TASK FORCE

Chair Robert Hobson (Chair)
 Director Susie Gimse
 Chair Al Richmond
 Director Rhona Martin
 Councillor Sharon Gaetz
 Mayor Frank Leonard
 Director Hans Cunningham