

Highlights of the UBCM Executive Meeting held May 14 - 15, 2009

The spring Executive meeting has traditionally been held in conjunction with one of the Area Association meetings or in Victoria. However, this year the Executive decided it would remain in Richmond for the spring meeting and hold the July meeting in Victoria in conjunction with the official opening of UBCM's new LEED Gold building.

A total of eight committee meetings were held in addition to the regular Executive meeting. Due to the May 12th provincial election, the Executive did not receive any delegations from Ministers. However, the Executive was fortunate to receive a delegation from Dale Wall, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Community Development.

General Executive decisions:

- received a report providing background and status of the federal **Building Canada Fund** and **Infrastructure Stimulus Fund** and directed staff to prepare advisory materials to all local governments.
- received a report comparing the election platforms of provincial parties with UBCM's priorities identified in the **Civics 101 Strategy**.
- in response to the 2009 Speech from the Throne reference to **industrial tax**, UBCM will be requesting the Province to work jointly to pursue research, gather stories and conduct a survey with respect to member actions in this area.
- requested that staff report back in July on establishing thresholds that will set parameters for which **provincial party leaders** are permitted to speak at Convention, based on the direction from delegates, by resolution, in 2008.
- discussed tentative schedule for the July 2009

Executive meeting in Victoria at the new LEED Gold building.

- advised that **175** local governments have now signed **Climate Action Charters**.
- received a status report on Victoria Operations, including Association Services, Local Government Program Services and Gas Tax/Public Transit Management Services.
- confirmed the following additional committee appointments:
 - Regional Hospital District Review Implementation Committee**
 - Chair Al Richmond, Chair UBCM Healthy Communities Committee
 - Marylyn Chiang, UBCM staff
- received a report on provincial legislation of interest to local government, introduced in the Legislature since the March 2009 Executive meeting. The report summarized Bill 13 – Forest Amendment Act, which amends sections of the Forest Act pertaining to **community forest agreements**.
- received an update on proposed **2009 conferences** noting that the Environment conference has been rescheduled to 2010; Province-wide C2C Forum has been postponed until funding commitments are confirmed; and the Electoral Area Directors Forum has been confirmed for June 26. Discussions are also underway to hold a policy

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session on the RCMP Contract Negotiations in conjunction with the 2009 Convention. As well the RD Task Force is looking to host a member consultation in late July to discuss ideas coming out of the Task Force's work. The Task Force will also be looking to report out at the 2009 Convention.

- received a report on the **Do Not Call List**. CRTC issued a public notice on April 20, 2009 indicating that a change has been made to the DNCL rules. All telemarketing telecommunications made by or on behalf of non-party candidates (including municipal election candidates and office holders) are now exempt from the rules.

Provincial Responses to 2008 Resolutions

The Executive received a report evaluating the provincial responses to resolutions endorsed at the 2008 UBCM Convention and providing recommendations for further action. The Executive approved the recommendations for further action on each resolution as specified in the report. Copies of provincial responses have been forwarded to resolution sponsors, and a full listing of the provincial responses is accessible on the UBCM website (www.civicnet.bc.ca) under Resolutions & Policy / Resolutions Database.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Presidents

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

- approved the application booklet and criteria for the 2009 Community Excellence Awards;
- directed staff to continue to pursue opportunities for new revenue generating group purchasing programs and consideration be given to sponsoring a benefit conference / learning opportunity for local governments;
- engage the newly elected provincial government in a discussion around local government priorities including infrastructure, Aboriginal Reconciliation Act and industrial taxation; and
- pursue renewal of the Protocol on Consultation and Cooperation with the BC School Trustees Association.

Convention

The Convention Committee discussed various facets of 2009 Convention planning, including programming, catering, Welcome Reception and banquet location and timing, the online registration process, and Partner's Program options.

The following recommendations were endorsed by the Executive:

- confirm "A Province of Champions" as the 2009

Convention theme;

- investigate alternate opportunities for Thursday banquet venue and entertainment in an effort to reduce costs and introduce a cultural element to the banquet; and
- pursue Keynote Speaker opportunities and continue with program development.

Environment

The Committee provided an overview of the delegations and policy issues discussed at their meeting. It was noted that the Committee received a delegation from Susan Ibott, Manager, Citizens Conservation Councils with the Climate Action Secretariat. Ms. Ibott provided an overview of the composition and mandate of the citizen conservation councils, which are designed to engage individuals, groups, and local communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and develop low carbon opportunities.

The Committee made the following recommendations to the Executive:

- monitor the implementation of the Controlled Alien Species Regulation to determine if the Regulation poses any challenges for local governments;
- communicate the organization's concerns that the list of prohibited species developed under the Controlled Alien Species Regulation was not developed in consultation with UBCM;

- monitor the implementation of the RAR Variance Protocol to determine whether there are any implementation challenges for, and/or concerns by, affected local governments; and
- send a letter of support to the Canadian Wireless Communications Association for its proposed stewardship plan for recycling cellular phones for British Columbia.

First Nations Relations

The Committee largely discussed policy issues related to the proposed Aboriginal Recognition and Reconciliation Act and Common Table treaty discussions.

The following recommendations were endorsed by Executive:

- engage the Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation (MARR) on the proposed legislation in light of UBCM's MOU on a Role for Local Government in the New Relationship with First Nations in BC;
- obtain a legal opinion on the proposed act once drafted and prepare a policy paper for UBCM members' consideration at Convention;
- forward to, and discuss with, the MARR Minister UBCM's discussion paper on the Common Table;
- approved seven newly elected (C2C) applications and three 2009/10 C2C applications as well approving in principle five 2009/10 C2C applications;
- arrange an informal event with the First Nations Leadership Council; and
- write the MARR Minister requesting confirmation that any issues that arise post-treaty are treated as New Relationship issues and are subject to the UBCM's MOU with the Province.

Community Economic Development

The Committee discussed a number of policy issues related to forestry, aquaculture, energy and received a delegation from Jim Fraser, Director, Transmission Inquiry for the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC). Mr. Fraser outlined the timeline and scope for the BCUC Inquiry and the opportunities available for local governments to provide input into the process.

The following recommendations were endorsed by the Executive:

- seek feedback from the Area Associations prior to finalizing its response to the Working Roundtable on Forestry's report over the summer;
- advise the membership of the BCUC Inquiry into long term transmission planning and encourage members to register by the end of the summer if they plan to provide input into the Inquiry. [UBCM will also register as an Inquiry participant and convey to the Inquiry broad member policy related to transmission planning. As well UBCM will facilitate communications about the BCUC Inquiry to members.];
- write the Minister of Agriculture and Lands asking how the Province plans to consult with local governments if it decides to move toward negotiating a delegation of authority from the federal government on regulating aquaculture operations; and
- monitor the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA) process and identify where future UBCM participation may assist affected coastal communities.

Healthy Communities

The Committee received updates on a number of files including the Public Health Act; RHD Cost Sharing Review report implementation; development of a Food Security Resource Guide Toolkit; Access to Produce Task Force and SPARC BC's Accessibility Bylaws Project.

Based on a discussion related to child poverty in BC the Committee put forward the following recommendation to the Executive:

- meet with representatives from Ministry of Children and Family Development and the office of Children and Youth to discuss how local governments can assist these two groups to address child poverty in BC.

Community Safety

The Committee discussed the provincial strategy regarding metal theft and agreed to obtain more information on the issue, particularly from the metal recycling industry.

The Committee met with Deputy Commissioner Gary Bass, Chief Superintendent Marianne Ryan, Officer in Charge of the Change Management Team and Inspector Mark Fisher, RCMP Liaison Officer Criminal Justice Reform Secretariat and discussed:

- Gang Issues/Organized Crime – the nature of gang activity in the province and some of the actions that police are taking to deal with the problem;
- Brown Report/Change Management Task Force – the creation of a separate entity for the RCMP under the federal structure, the creation of a Board of Management, and the implementation of an independent oversight and complaints process to deal with citizens complaints;
- RCMP Crime Reduction Model – police efforts in focusing on prolific offenders in the local community

and the impact that this can have on reducing police calls.

Regional District Task Force

The Task Force met and continued to explore in greater detail the three issues that were outlined to members at the 2008 UBCM Convention – Electoral Area Governance; Fringe Area Planning and Servicing Issues; and Crown Land/Regional District Interface. The Task Force examined policy papers around each of these issues and looked at different ways that problems in these areas might be addressed. The intent is to develop a discussion paper outlining some of the options and recommended changes for consideration at the 2009 UBCM Convention.

Meeting with Dale Wall, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Community Development

The Executive met with Dale Wall, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Community Development as the new Cabinet has yet to be appointed after the May 12th provincial election. Members had an opportunity to discuss two specific files with the Deputy Minister - infrastructure and industrial taxation.

Infrastructure - The President indicated that in response to the federal government's announcement to accelerate infrastructure funding, there were expectations amongst local governments that this funding would be targeted specifically toward local government priorities. As well with new infrastructure programs being announced (ie. RinC) the President sought an update on the Province's position with respect to providing matching funding to these federal initiatives.

Mr. Wall provided an overview of the various funding programs that were set out in the 2009 federal budget. He indicated that the provincial government had moved quickly to work with the federal government to provide infrastructure funding for a significant number of projects prior to the provincial election. Since that time the federal government has provided more detail on how it expects those programs to work. Determining the nature of provincial involvement in these federal programs is a priority for the Ministry.

Industrial Taxation - The President referenced the 2009 Speech from the Throne which indicated that the Province would work with UBCM to develop new legislation that will protect provincial tax reductions for those in the industrial tax class. The President indicated that in response to this reference, many local governments are concerned that the Province is going to try and cap industrial tax rates, and recounted UBCM's experience back in 2006 on this matter.

Mr. Wall indicated that in 2006 the government responded by not capping industrial tax rates but undertook other policy and legislative actions to address the industrial tax class. The President advised that UBCM had endorsed a recommendation earlier in the meeting to request that the Province work with UBCM to jointly pursue research, gather stories and conduct a survey with respect to industrial tax policy. Mr. Wall indicated that the Province was interested in having a dialogue with UBCM on this matter and this UBCM request would be included as part of that discussion.