EXECUTIVE RELEASE

May 6, 2010

Highlights of the UBCM Executive Meeting held April 22 – 23, 2010

The April meeting is the third meeting of the year for Executive members. In addition to the quarterly board meeting, nine committees also met over the two-day period. The meeting was held in Victoria and Executive members had an opportunity to undertake provincial government outreach efforts during their meetings. In addition to meeting with the Minister of Community and Rural Development, the Honourable Bill Bennett, Committee members also met with six other cabinet ministers to discuss common policy matters.

General Executive Decisions

• received reports on the provincial Throne Speech and Budget which highlighted key elements in both and their impact on local governments.
• received a report confirming receipt of all provincial responses to UBCM’s 2009 resolutions, with a detailed analysis of the provincial responses to be presented to the Executive at the July 2010 meeting.
• made a decision on three referred resolutions from 2009:
  - endorsed resolution B136, Community Watersheds, with the following amendment:
    THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities request the provincial government to develop, implement and fund a strategy whereby consultation is undertaken with potentially affected local governments in advance of there being a change in ownership of land (from public to private) within a community watershed;
  - agreed to work with the Province on the development and implementation of changes to the farm assessment process.
  - referred resolution B147, For-profit Clinics, to the 2010 Annual Convention.
• received a report from UBCM members appointed to the Local Government Elections Task Force on the issues being considered by the Task Force and possible directions. The Executive provided input and feedback on a variety of matters.
• received a report on the status of the Industrial Taxation Steering Committee.
• received a report on recently introduced provincial legislation.

• approved UBCM representation to an Off Road Vehicle (ORV) working group in response to a request by the Province to engage UBCM in consultations related to the development of a new provincial framework for managing ORVs.
• received a status report on Victoria Operations including the currently provincially funded programs administered by UBCM under the Local Government Program Services and the Gas Tax / Public Transit Programs.
• agreed to continue to work with the Province on the development and implementation of changes to the farm assessment process.
• work with Wood First BC and Ministry of Forest staff in the development of a strategy around the use of wood in local construction projects that receive provincial funding.
• work with the Province in reviewing the report and implementation of any of the recommendations related to the new fire service model.
• continue to work with the Province and monitor the changes that it might undertake with regards to the delivery of ambulance services.
• consult with local governments on the impact of the proposed Net Zero Deforestation Act on British Columbia’s communities, and work with the Ministry of Community and Rural Development and the Ministry of Forests and Range to explore and identify opportunities related to the Act.
• develop a submission for the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities based on the findings from UBCM’s infrastructure deadline survey.
• monitor the advancement of changes/enhancements to the Additional Hotel Room Tax (AHRT) program and continue to advocate for the role of local governments in the decision-making and delivery of local tourism marketing.

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

Presidents

First Vice-President Barbara Steele reported out on the matters discussed at the Committee meeting. The Committee received a delegation from Richard Taylor, Mayor Frank Leonard and Chair Robert Hobson, UBCM’s representatives to the Municipal Pension Plan (MPP) Board. The representatives discussed the appointment of a Trustee to represent exempt staff; implementation of a new group 5 for police and firefighters; definition of firefighter and the results of an actuarial valuation.

The following recommendations were put forward to the Executive:

• approved the categories and sponsorship plan for the 2010 Excellence Awards program
• approved the development of a broad, principle-based fiscal management study that would respond to the recent media campaigns that have discredited the fiscal management of BC local governments.
• agreed to have Executive members participate in the review of nominations as part of the 2010 Order of BC nomination process as requested by the Order of BC.

Convention

Convention Committee Chair Robert Hobson provided an overview of the Committee’s discussions. The basic format and program development for this year’s Convention were relayed, including discussions regarding this year’s theme, keynote and banquet entertainment options, and catering plans. The Committee also received an update confirming the City Victoria’s intention to host the 2012 Convention. The following recommendations were presented to the UBCM Executive:

• approve the draft Long Program
• remove the Friday morning clinics from the program to allow additional time for resolutions.
• approve the 2010 Convention theme “Forging Gold Medal Standards”
• play recorded background music at the reception and banquet in place of a live performer.
• pursue the Hairfarmers as after-dinner banquet entertainment.
• due to space constraints, delegates will have lunch on their own in Whistler Village, in place of hosting a formal Delegates Lunch.

Environment

Committee Chair, Director Rhona Martin, provided an overview of the key policy issues discussed including the new zero net deforestation legislation, the draft wastewater effluent regulations, referred resolutions, small drinking water systems, and the Water Act modernization process.

The following recommendations were presented to the UBCM Executive:

• work with the Province on developing communications materials for local governments on the Zero Net Deforestation legislation and monitor the development of the regulations supporting the legislation.
• call for a funding formula for the implementation of the wastewater systems effluent regulations which includes senior government financial contributions;
• not endorse Resolution 2009-B120.
• not endorse Resolution 2009-B10.
• endorse an amended Resolution 2009-B128.
• write to the Minister of Healthy Living and Sport calling for the immediate creation of a provincial small drinking water systems working group.
• arrange a meeting with the Minister of Healthy Living and Sport to discuss small drinking water systems.

First Nations Relations

Committee Chair, Councillor Murry Krause, provided an overview of the issues discussed. He noted that the Committee met with Charles Porter, ADM, First Nations Initiatives, Division, Integrated Land Management Bureau (ILMB) as well as Mike Furey and Cathy Watson from the Ministry of Community & Rural Development. The Committee learned about ILMB’s efforts to coordinate provincial multi-agency consultation with First Nations. He also noted that the Committee met with the Honourable George Abbott, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation.

Councillor Krause presented the recommendations of the Committee:

• invite Charles Porter, ADM for the First Nations Initiatives Division, to meet with Committee prior to the July meeting.
• regarding the federal round table on Aboriginal Rights and Title, that staff work with treaty advisory committees on a response to federal treaty negotiation mandate changes.
Healthy Communities

Chair Al Richmond provided an overview of the policy issues discussed and reported that the Committee met with the Honourable Ida Chong, Minister of Healthy Living and Sport to discuss the Public Health Act, the Sewerage System Regulations and the Small Drinking Water Systems; and Honourable Mary Polak, Minister of Children and Family Development and Minister Responsible for Child Care to discuss child poverty. The Committee also received a delegation from the Health Officers Council of BC to discuss a potential relationship between UBCM and the Health Officers Council. Chair Richmond presented the Committee report and the following recommendations:

- write a letter to Health Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency re-iterating UBCM’s request for mandatory labelling of genetically modified foods consumed in Canada.
- continue the discussion regarding a potential working relationship with the Health Officers Council at the July Healthy Communities Committee meeting.

Community Economic Development

Committee Vice-Chair, Karen Goodings advised that the Committee reviewed updates on a number of energy matters and a report on the status of transition of aquaculture regulation from the Province to the federal government. The Committee also had an opportunity to meet with the Hon. Blair Lekstrom, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and the Hon. Steve Thomson, Minister of Agriculture and Lands. The following recommendations were presented:

- work with the Province on developing communications materials for local governments on the Zero Net Deforestation legislation and monitor the development of the regulations supporting the legislation;
- write to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans requesting that community consultation take place as soon as possible with respect to the transition of regulatory authority for aquaculture.
- assist with the distribution of a survey by BC Hydro designed to identify what types of energy efficiency and conservation policy initiatives are being pursued by local governments.
- received notice of Remote Community Implementation Funding Program (see page 5).

Community Safety

The Committee met with Attorney General Mike de Jong and discussed the following issues – public confidence in the court system, expansion of community courts, the need to address policing costs in the RCMP contract, local government representation on PRIME-BC Board, overcrowding in the provincial corrections system and keep of prisoner costs.

The following recommendations were presented and the UBCM Executive:

- agreed to arrange a conference call between the RCMP Contract Renewal Advisory Committee and staff from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General to the discuss the RCMP contract negotiations;
- work with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General staff on the appointment of three local government representatives on the PRIME-BC Board;
- work with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General to survey local governments regarding Keep of Prisoner costs.

Executive Structure Review

Committee Chair Robert Hobson summarized discussions to date from the Structure Review Committee. The Committee has been established to respond to the request from Metro Vancouver to seek additional representation on the UBCM Executive. The Committee has reviewed the evolution of the UBCM Executive; historical changes to its structure; and the UBCM Bylaws. Presently, the Committee is reviewing options for UBCM Executive restructure; balanced representation of all types of communities; addition of new positions versus restructuring existing positions; logistics for elections; financial costs; population data; and engaging larger communities in UBCM activities.

Rural Resource Roads

The Committee is working with the Minister of Community and Rural Development and Ray Schultz, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Community and Rural Development to improve public access to rural resource roads. The rural resource road network has been developed incrementally over generations and under different approving authorities. A number of options are being explored regarding the future management and use of resource roads – the level of road maintenance, liability of users, and public expectations around the use of resource roads. It is anticipated that a report on rural resource roads will go to the 2010 UBCM Convention.
Meeting with Honourable Bill Bennett Minister, Ministry of
Community and Rural Development

The Executive discussed the following issues with the Minister:

Elections Task Force
Minister Bennett indicated that the Task Force had established a good process and that there were still some issues that it needed to reach a consensus on. He pointed out that the report of the Elections Task Force was to be completed by the end of May and that the Minister intended to take the Task Force report to his colleagues in June 2010. The goal of the ministry was to begin drafting the legislation as soon as possible and that the intent was to have it in place for the local government elections in 2011.

Industrial Taxation
Minister Bennett suggested that the goal of the Province was to facilitate a process for addressing the industrial taxation issue at the local level, rather than impose a solution. He was of the view that it was better for industry and local government to negotiate an arrangement that worked for the local community and that some progress was being made on the matter. He indicated that the Province was not looking to use the Industrial Tax review as a means to cap industrial tax rates.

Provincial Budget Update
Minister Bennett reported that the Ministry of Community and Rural Development had come through the provincial budget cutbacks in good shape and that the provincial commitment to local government grants and traffic fine revenue had not been affected. He pointed out that the ministry was required to make $4 million in budgetary cuts and that these cuts would come from the Trees for Tomorrow and Towns for Tomorrow programs.

Speech from the Throne
The Executive raised two issues that referenced local government in the 2010 Throne Speech. The first issue was a new Investment Process Review that local government would be asked to partner in, that would look at all impediments to reasonable investment, including zoning, licensing and permitting requirements. The second issue was the development of affordable housing for young families in existing neighbourhoods.

Minister Bennett indicated that the Province was looking at ways to better coordinate federal, provincial and local government approval processes for industrial development. The Province would be looking to consult with UBCM in developing a better approach to addressing development proposals from industry.

Minister Bennett suggested that the key focus of the second point was to identify measures that would make housing more affordable for young families, such as in-fill development (coach houses etc.) and the use of phased development agreements. He indicated that the ministry would be holding a one day symposium in September with local government and industry to identify and discuss a range of measures that might be implemented to make housing more affordable.

Regional District Forum
Minister Bennett indicated that the ministry was willing to move forward on some of the issues identified in the Regional District Task Force and at the meeting of regional district Chairs and Chief Administrative Officers in Victoria. He stated that the ministry was willing to move forward with reasonable suggestions to regional district legislation.
NOTICE OF FUNDING:

Remote Community Implementation (RCI) Program

The Remote Community Implementation (RCI) Program aims to develop, and distribute funding grants that support remote communities to implement clean energy and energy efficiency projects. The program is intended to support the implementation of projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce dependence on fossil fuel resources, reduce energy costs and help meet a remote community’s economic, social and physical sustainability goals.

Eligibility

Remote communities in British Columbia are eligible to apply for funding through this initiative. Remote Communities are defined as both civic and First Nation communities that are not connected to the major natural gas or electric grid. There are approximately 70 remote communities identified in British Columbia; roughly half are First Nations. The majority of these communities use diesel generators to support their electricity demand.

Remote communities are invited to submit project proposals related to (but not limited to) the following focus areas:

- Community-scale or building-scale alternative power projects that use in-stream hydro, micro hydro, bioenergy, wind, solar or ocean energy technologies;
- Demand side management projects that upgrade existing community buildings or community infrastructure or improve the design of new buildings over the BC Building Code;
- Community-scale or building-scale alternative heating projects that use solar, biomass, geo-exchange or air source heating;
- Integrated smart grid, clean energy and demand side management projects; and
- District energy systems that use combined heat and power systems supported by clean energy resources.

Projects are divided into two main streams based on project types over three years.

- **Minor Projects:** Funding of between $25,000 and $45,000 (8 to 13 projects to be funded). Projects designed to eliminate or significantly displace diesel generation.

- **Major Projects:** Funding of between $100,000 and $300,000 (4 to 6 projects to be funded). Projects designed to eliminate diesel generation (except for back-up purposes).

  *All projects should target a $40/t greenhouse gas emission displaced.*

The RCI project website [http://fraserbasin.bc.ca/programs/cae_rci.html](http://fraserbasin.bc.ca/programs/cae_rci.html) contains further information on project selection criteria and background information.

How to apply

The RCI Program is accepting project proposals for review in June 2010. To submit a project proposal, please complete an application form and send it to Tanya Hebron by email or by mail to the address provided below. The deadline for the June application review is **May 21, 2010**. For additional information, and/or to have an application form mailed or emailed to you, please contact:

Tanya Hebron  
1st Floor, 470 Granville Street  
Vancouver, BC V6C 1V5  
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This program is funded by the B.C. Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources