

IN THE HOUSE

UNION OF
BRITISH
COLUMBIA
MUNICIPALITIES



#60 - 10551 SHELLBRIDGE WAY
RICHMOND, BC V6X 2W9
(604) 270-8226 Fax: (604) 270-9116
E-mail: ubcm@civicnet.bc.ca

Community Services Statutes Amendment Act Receives Royal Assent

Bill 10, the *Community Services Statutes Amendment Act, 2006* received Royal Assent on March 28, 2006.

The following are highlights from the key statutes amended by this Act:

Community Charter, Local Government Act and Municipalities Enabling and Validating Act (No. 3)

Municipalities and regional districts will now be permitted to hold meetings and hearings outside their boundaries. The amendments confirm a right understood to be part of local government powers and extend protection to local governments from challenges to proceedings held outside their boundaries.

Local Government Act

- The Province can exempt certain types of regional district bylaws from provincial approval requirements. This amendment parallels the provision for municipalities in Section 280 of the *Community Charter*.
- Regional district committee meetings can be held by means of electronic or other communications facilities.
- Local governments and improvement districts are authorized to extend the cost recovery period for collecting latecomer charges for infrastructure services to a maximum of 15 years.
- Municipal commercial vehicle licences will be based on the calendar year in line with the municipal fiscal year. This amendment follows a specific

request by UBCM to the Minister of Community Services.*

UBCM will be following up with members directly with respect to implementation issues.

Other amendments include:

Vancouver Charter

Four amendments provide the City of Vancouver with authorities consistent with other municipalities relating to: firefighters directing traffic; enforcement of bylaws through the simpler court petition process; ability to reduce holding times on unclaimed property; and additional flexibility in sign bylaws.

Greater Vancouver Sewerage & Drainage District Act

Two amendments support equity and certainty in the development finance system.

Local Government Act

The Resort Municipality of Whistler and the minister responsible for local government will be responsible for approving Whistler Resort Association bylaws, rather than the municipality and the provincial cabinet.

Municipalities Enabling and Validating Act (No. 3)

An amendment authorizes an agreement between the Village of Port Alice and the Port Alice pulp mill owner to establish the amount of municipal tax to be imposed on the property over a five-year period.

* Prior to this amendment, the commercial vehicle licence (CVL) year began on March 1 and ended on February 28. It has its roots in the old system when all vehicle licenses in BC expired at the end of February. It was pointed out to UBCM that the public is inconvenienced and municipalities may lose revenue because the timing of business licensing and commercial vehicle licensing is so far separated.

This amendment will see the new CVL license year commence January 1, 2007. The current "grace period" will become November and December. Holders of 2006 permits will be allowed to renew at a pro-rated fee for 2007 only if they can supply evidence that they held a 2006 permit. There will be no requirement imposed on the municipality in this respect. The administrative portion of the fee will not be adjusted and will continue to be retained in full by the issuing jurisdiction.

Please make copies of this Circular and distribute them to Council/Board Members and Staff