Government Keeps Commitments to Maintain Local Government Transfers

Premier Gordon Campbell said at the 2001 UBCM Convention we won’t cut your transfer payments either. I have consistently said that we are opposed to downloading - we will not download. He reiterated at the March 11th meeting of the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities that:

We did make some choices at a government. We chose to assure that we have the resources that we allocated for health care and education. We chose to assure that municipalities had a protected $30 million dollar transfer payment. We said that to you at the UBCM, we’re not living up to that commitment in spite of the fact that across government outside of health care and education, we have had to reduce government expenditures by in some cases up to 25 and 30%. New people have told me to say that doesn’t show what happens in the future.

If we use inflationary costs, etc. and I accept that, it doesn’t but at least it maintains the funding that you’ve had in the face of dramatic and significant changes in the areas of the government.

In the following days details of the 2002 transfers were announced. This year’s transfers include:

- $23.9 million in small community protection grants, for small and medium-sized municipalities to fund basic services for residents.
- $2.1 million in regional district grant funding.

- $10 million in additional unconditional grants for municipalities providing police services and other services and allocated on the basis of their policing costs.

Local government are one of the few areas that provincial government has maintained funding without any changes despite its other budget pressures. Over the next three years local government will receive a $130 million each year in transfers. As we look forward, local government expect to engage the provincial government in discussions regarding:

- Crown corporations paying equivalent to property taxes.
- New revenue sources to be proposed as part of the Community Charter.
- Sharing of 75% of traffic fine revenue.

In a related matter, the UBCM Executive and Minister George Abbott agreed that the Small Community Protection grants formula needs review to put it on a better footing.

New Era documents said that government would put a Community Charter to outline provincial government “offloading” of costs onto municipalities, a direction that was echoed in the Community Charter Council Act set of principles for the new Charter.

Before new responsibilities and revenues are assigned to municipalities, there must be provision for resources required to fulfill the responsibilities. The impacts and implications on local government and communities of the provincial government’s Core Review (referred to on January 17th and the provincial budget (February 19th) confirmation to maintain local government transfers raises the question about what actually constitutes downloading.

This newsletter presents a possible analytic framework to help focus what is likely to be a future discussion.

New Era documents said that government would put a Community Charter to outline provincial government “offloading” of costs onto municipalities, a direction that was echoed in the Community Charter Council Act set of principles for the new Charter. Before new responsibilities and revenues are assigned to municipalities, there must be provision for resources required to fulfill the responsibilities. The impacts and implications on local government and communities of the provincial government’s Core Review (referred to on January 17th and the provincial budget (February 19th) confirmation to maintain local government transfers raises the question about what actually constitutes downloading.

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Core Review of the government management and delivery of emergency health services currently provided throughout the Emergency Health Services Commission and the British Columbia Ambulance Service, and in that regard the Select Standing Committee on Health recommended recently that the BC Ambulance Service devolve operation and control of the system to the regional health boards.

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Core Reviews CONTINUE

Many UBCM members have expressed appreciation for UBCM for its prompt and comprehensive summary of the January Core Service Review decisions. This material is posted on the CivicNet website. UBCM continues to update the information.

UBCM also continues to follow, intervene and report on other restructuring activities. Some of the other changes for UBCM are following is:

• The new Land & Water British Columbia Inc (formerly BC Assets and Lands) is reviewing its policy on fee crown grants.
• Core Review of Emergency Health Services. The Ministry of Health Services is conducting a

UBCM’s 2002 Net-Work-Book will be available soon!!
(See page 20 for more information and order form)
I am looking forward to attending the next few Association meetings this spring, not only to hear directly your issues and concerns but to observe the resolutions debates as a lead up to the UBCM Convention in September. I recently attended the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities conference in Campbell River and was impressed with the quality of spirited debate on issues of concern both regionally and to the province. The Health care, police costs, softwood lumber, consultation and provincial offloading were a few of the main areas of discussion. It is important as we move forward through this period of significant change that UBCM remain true to its roots as a policy based organization. For instance, we have a well-developed set of policies on local-provincial relations to help guide us through these changes.

And this will be a period of significant change. I want to touch on some of these matters. The Community Charter Council has completed its work and now it’s up to the Community Charter in the hands of Minister Nebbeling. The release of the Charter will signal the beginning of a broader consultation phase that is expected to last several months. This will be the first time, you, the membership, will have an opportunity to review not just the policies and principles that guided the preparation of the legislation, but the detailed provisions themselves. In advance of the release we are working both with the Minister and internally, to ensure you have the materials you need to review and assess the Charter. We will also be organizing some consultation events such as a provincial-wide Legislative Symposium. Consulting on the Community Charter will be a major activity in the months ahead.

One of the principles the council adopted as a guiding principle in the preparation of the Charter was around consultation with local government on changes that affect us. Changes at the provincial level have been wide-ranging and fast paced. I saw at AVICC members meetings that consultation with the province wasn’t meeting expectations. I too share those concerns, made somewhat stronger, when it comes to announcements such as that on the new gaming legislation. However, in other instances, such as on new forest policy, we have been actively engaged. In this area we had the opportunity to involve the members in a recent workshop on forest policy proposals and to communicate the results of those discussions to government. It is my intention to signal to government the successful consultations and build on that experience. Another change of significance appeared in the results of the recent Census and underscored a major challenge facing UBCM. What we see is continuing growth in the metropolitan and urban regions while some of the other regions of BC are experiencing stable or declining populations. This will challenge UBCM to ensure that we are attuned to all our members needs and the necessity of finding common ground, for indeed we do have many issues of common concern.

One common ground is around infrastructure needs. We have been pressing for further announcements and I am feeling better that we will be able to see some significant announcements in the near future. As you read through the newsletter you will see the wide range of initiatives with which UBCM is dealing. I would welcome your comments on these or any other matters of concern to you. These are times of change and your Executive is committed to change that benefits local government and our communities. Your guidance and support will help us realize that goal.

In closing, I would like to express my thanks to all the members in a recent workshop held in March 1999 was very well received by the local government staff that attended the forum. The 1999 Forum received an overall rating of 4.3 out of a possible 5.0, based on a 63% response rate.

The agenda for the April 2002 forum will include speakers giving presentations on a variety of topics including group benefits underwriting and administration, benefit trends, disability management, recent government changes to MSP paramedic coverage and Pharmacare, and Municipal Pension Plan (MPP) benefits and recent changes.

We look forward to a good turnout from local government for this Benefits Forum. If you have any questions regarding the event please contact Barbara Ingamells, Manager, Member Services (Ph: 604.270.8226, Email: barbara@ubcm.bc.ca).
Local Government Legislation

UBCM continues to monitor and analyze new legislation affecting or of interest to local government. Our primary communication is our In The House circulars which are faxed (normally immediately after introduction of a Bill) mailed and included in our Civic Net website. In conjunction with the 2002 Provincial Legislative session we have issued the following In The House circulars:

Feb 12 – Speech from the Throne
Mar 13 – Gaming Control Act Introduced
Mar 20 – Liquor Policy - New Directions

We also report in this newsletter on:
- New gaming legislation (page 6)
- New liquor policy (page 20)
- Information & Privacy Act Amendments (page 7)
- Smoking regulations revisions (page 13)

Visit Civic Net
Civic Net, www.civicnet.gov.bc.ca, UBCM website, is regularly updated to keep the context current and relevant. We have recently established some feature topics so that members can access new information. These include:

- Police costs
- 2002 Convention
- Provincial Government restructuring

Visit our home page to make these links.

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Community Enhancement
Services for First Nations
Community Services & Financing

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- Local Government Consulting
- Community Enhancement
- Services for First Nations
- Community Services & Financing

For information on our services, please contact us directly or visit our website at www.urban-systems.com

2002 Local Government Awareness: “Local Government – At Your Service”

For those communities that carry out programming to promote local government awareness, here is a reminder that the deadline for submitting nominations for the annual awards program is May 31, 2002. Kit materials, including nomination forms, were sent to all local governments in February. We also remind you that we will once again be asking for nominations for the Best Local Government Internet Web Site. This year a new category for regional districts has been established so we are anticipating receiving a number of entries under this category. If your local government has a web-site to be proud of, then please tell us about it. We also remind those that have previously made submissions to try again. The sites change so much every year and deserve a fresh look.

For those wishing to get a head start on planning their 2002 program, the information kit and nomination forms for 2002 can be found on CivicNet at: http://www.civicnet.gov.bc.ca/ubcm/awarness_2002, or call the UBCM offices at 604.270.8226.

Recent Appointments

Dale Wall, Assistant Deputy Minister, Local Government, Ministry of Community, Aboriginal, Women’s Services to Ministry of Community, Aboriginal, Women’s Services to Ministry of Sustainability Resource Management.

Jack Weisgerber has assumed the role of Executive Director of the BC Municipal Finance Authority, on December 12, 2001 when the health authorities restructuring was announced. The Provincial Health Services Authority has eleven governors plus the chair. All chairs were appointed by the government. Each regional authority will have eight governors plus the chair. The site has improved considerably since the previous valuation which was completed as at December 31, 1997. Actuarial valuations are completed every three years for the MPP.

The December 31, 2000 MPP valuation reports a surplus of $436 million compared to the $547 million unfunded liability reported three years earlier. The report indicates further that there are 34,568 pensioners in the plan.

Recent Appointment

Recent Trustee appointments to the Municipal Pension Plan Board of Trustees include Mayor Frank Leonard for a one year term and Barbara Ingamells for a three year term. Richard Taylor, while replaced as a primary trustee, will remain as the Alternate Trustee for both principal Trustee appointments.

UBCM has two principal Trustee positions on the six member Trustee Board.

Annual General Meeting

The Joint Trusteeship Agreement calls for an Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Municipal Pension Plan and the first AGM will be held on November 2, 2002 in the Lower Mainland. Further information on the AGM will be circulated at a later date.

Questions regarding the pension plan can be directed to Barbara Ingamells, Manager, Members Services at 604.270.8226, Fax: 604.270.9116, Email: bingamell@unicorn.gov.bc.ca.

Government Restructuring continues

Property Assessments

Responsibility for the BC Assessment Authority property review and Property Assessment Appeal Board have been transferred from the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal, Women’s Services to Ministry of Sustainability Resource Management.

Law BC Inc.

BC assets and lands has become Land and Water British Columbia Inc with expanded responsibilities. Bill Valentine is the CEO.

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Municipal Pension Plan Update

Actuarial Valuation

The Municipal Pension Plan (MPP) Actuarial Valuation as at December 31, 2000 was recently reviewed by the Board of Trustees. The plan has improved considerably since the previous valuation which was completed as at December 31, 1997. Actuarial valuations are completed every three years for the MPP.

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Area Associations

AVICC EXECUTIVE

The Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Executive for 2002/2003 is:

President Councillor Mary Ashley Campbell River
First Vice President Councillor Stan Dixon Sechelt
Second Vice President Chair George Holme Nanaimo RD
Electoral Area Rep Director Adrian Belshaw Sunshine Coast RD Director at Large Councillor Don Gemmell Powell River District
Director at Large Councillor Bea Holland Victoria
Past President Mayor Jack Peake Lake Cowichan

Councillor Mary Ashley was re-elected as President for a second term. New members of the Executive are Mayor Jack Peake and Director Adrian Belshaw. All other Executive members were re-elected to positions they held previously.

AVICC represents municipalities and regional districts on Vancouver Island, the Sunshine Coast, Powell River and the Central Coast and includes the Islands Trust.

AVICC UPCOMING CONVENTIONS

The AVICC conference in Campbell River considered and approved a bylaw amendment with respect to the timing of the annual meeting. The conference approved a change to hold the AGM in April. The AGM confirmed that the meetings will continue to be held on Friday afternoon through Sunday morning. The new dates for upcoming conferences are:

2003 April 3, 4 and 5 Port Alberni
2004 April 1, 2 and 3 Parksville
2005 March 31, April 1 and 2 Courtenay
2006 April 6, 7 and 8 Nanaimo

Members who have made accommodation reservations for 2003 should revise those plans accordingly.

Excerpts from an Address by Premier Gordon Campbell to the AVICC

I said before the last election that I intended to come back and continue to meet with municipal associations from across the province. These are opportunities for not just me but for my colleagues to come and hear from you about the issues you are dealing with, the concerns that you have and to help work, all of us together to try and put the province back on track.

The Community Charter is an effort, a sincere and honest effort by the government to reflect a number of the lessons and the principles that you have brought to AVIC and AVICC meetings for decades for now and that other area associations and that UBCM have brought to the provincial governments attention. We believe that it is critical as we move forward to develop that Charter, we will not impose that Charter upon municipalities. That Charter is there to create a framework that you feel you can work within. It is to give you the tools and the power that you need to make accountable decisions at the local level. I used to say that municipal government was triple A government, accessible, accountable and affordable. I still believe that. One of the things that we want to do is make sure we take those lessons of accessibility, and accountability and affordability and apply them to the provincial level. To eliminate the imposition of political decisions on local communities that really doesn’t have to be done at all. To give local governments the rights to make their own decision, to chart their own course and their own destiny. We do know in a province the size of British Columbia that one size fits all solutions don’t work.

We’re going to be working with you to make sure that we’re meeting the needs of your communities. As we do that we know that there are some areas where we’re going to have improvements. The federal/provincial infrastructure program is one of them. $800 million has been set aside for infrastructure funding over the next six years. We have already fifteen sewer and water projects and I do want to

Continued on page 6
BC Gas Proposes New Operating Agreement

Late last year, BC Gas proposed a new operating agreement to some 46 Interior communities to replace the existing franchise fee agreements. Under the present franchise agreements BC Gas collects 3% from the customers in the service area and remits that amount to the municipality. The proposed new agreement foresees other third parties selling natural gas directly to the customer and BC Gas only acting as the distributor of the gas. Therefore the proposed new fee would be set on the distribution of the gas, not the price of the commodity itself. The proposed fee paid to the affected municipalities would be 6% of the distribution margin for all residential and commercial customers and 3% for all other classes including industrial users.

Many communities potentially affected by a new agreement approached UBCM seeking assistance in providing a coordinated response to the proposal. The issue was raised at the November 2001 Executive meeting at which time the Executive endorsed the following motion:

That UBCM contact all BC communities to determine the status of gas operating agreements and coordinate their joint actions if there is interest in pursuing such on a user pay basis.

Upon canvassing the affected communities, the majority of municipalities agreed that there was merit in having UBCM undertake a coordinating role to provide technical/legal analysis of the agreement and prepare a submission on behalf of the affected local governments. However, since that time the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) has ruled on the BC Gas proposal indicating that it will not consider BC Gas’ application for a standard operating agreement. In its letter to BC Gas, BCUC stated that the “process suggested by BC Gas would be inconsistent with the Commission’s authority under Section 32 of the Utilities Commission Act. In particular, the Commission believes that it would be inappropriate for it to undertake a general review to establish a standard form agreement between BC Gas and municipalities in the Inland and Columbia service territories.” Consequently, BC Gas has now been directed to:

- continue with the existing operating agreements with municipalities where an agreement has not expired, unless both parties mutually agree to undertake negotiations;
- negotiate new agreements, individually, with municipalities where existing agreements have expired. Only in those circumstances where BC Gas and the individual municipality cannot reach a new agreement would the BCUC anticipate BC Gas to make application to the Commission to have the Commission determine the terms of such an agreement.

Funding for Affordable Housing

On December 18, 2001, the BC Government signed an agreement with the federal government for $177 million, which will ensure that the province remains involved in developing affordable homes. Each level of government will cost share on a 50/50 basis, with each contributing $88.7 million over five years. This agreement was the first signed by any province under the new affordable housing program, which has been advocated by FCM on a national basis.

The first project announcements under the new agreement came on March 13, 2002 which indicated that the government would help fund almost 700 new units of non-profit housing across BC. Twenty non-profit societies will develop 667 units of housing worth about $100 million in communities as diverse as Langford, Lillooet, Williams Lake and Vancouver. The units will provide housing for some of the province’s most vulnerable citizens, including frail seniors, people at risk of being homeless, people with disabilities and First Nations citizens.

Private, non-profit, community, municipal and federal partners contributed $49 million in land and equity toward the new projects, helping to maximize the number of new units that provincial housing dollars can fund.

Provincial budget information indicates that the funding for housing programs will increase from $126 million in 2001-02 to $142 million in 2002-03.

UBCM News March 2002
Gaming Control Act Introduced

On March 4, 2002 the Honourable Rich Coleman, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General introduced Bill 6, Gaming Control Act. The Bill confirms the direction taken by the government back in September 2001 to streamline and consolidate gaming in BC – with the establishment of one Act, the Gaming Control Act, and two gaming agencies, the BC Lottery Corporation and the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch.

P rior to September there were five gaming agencies (BC Gaming Commission, BC Racing Commission, Gaming Policy Secretariat, Gaming Audit and Investigation Office and the BC Lottery Corporation) and four Acts (Lottery Act, Lottery Corporation Act, Horseracing Act and the Horseracing Tax Act) governing gaming in BC. The Act:
• confirms that the BC Lottery Corporation (BCLC) is responsible for the conduct and management of gaming on behalf of the government.
• requires that the legislation be in place to implement the Memorandum of Agreement with the BCLC.
• states that the BCLC’s gaming activities and the government’s position on them will be consistent with the Gaming Policy.
• is comprehensive gaming legislation, with local governments not in the Act since there are no local governments in place. Concern is that the local governments will be left out of the revenue sharing arrangement in the Act.

The general manager is an appointment of the minister, the BC Lottery Corporation (BCLC) is responsible for overseeing the location, relocation or substantial change to a facility.

Some areas of concern include:
• lack of information on what constitutes “substantial change”.
• lack of information on what constitutes “known agencies”.
• lack of information on what constitutes “materially affected”.
• lack of confirmation in the Act of the BC Lottery Corporation’s position on matters that the present Memorandum of Agreement with local governments does not cover.

The Act also provides for the BCLC to manage horseracing on behalf of the government if directed to do so by the minister.

Holiday, regional district or first nation that has to consult each municipally, regional district or first nation that is “immediately adjacent” to the government corporation considers will be materially affected...
• non-binding dispute resolution process in place for disputes between parties over gaming decisions.

UBCM needs to seek clarification about how this directive fits with the present location, relocation or substantial change to a facility process outlined in Bill 6. In an earlier report to government, the BCLC had adopted the recommendation that a separate agency be established to oversee the location and relocation process through an independent, transparent selection process. Under Bill 6, the BCLC will continue to manage horseracing.

The UBCM’s Protective Services Committee will be seeking clarification on this process and these matters in the coming weeks. A meeting has been arranged with Minister Coleman April 16th, 2002. As information becomes available UBCM will make it known to the membership.

Excerpts from Gordon Campbell

Continued from page 4

say that we are committed to working on that kind of a project because its simply too fundamental to the quality of public health in the province not to pay attention to it. We’ll be having more announcements about that in the future... I can tell you when it comes to infrastructure funding there’s not enough there yet to meet all of the demands that every community in every part of the province have identified. We’re going to have to work together to look at how we may be able to fund projects on a priority basis, on that kind of a project that is of fundamental importance to public health in the province.

We’ve also increased funding for drug and alcohol monitoring and protection by a total of $3 million dollars this year. We think that’s critical so that we can at least have the kind of early warning system that is necessary to make sure we make the improvements that are required to maintain public health across the province.

UBCM needs to seek clarification about how this directive fits with the present location, relocation or substantial change to a facility process outlined in Bill 6.
On March 5th, the provincial government introduced Bill 7, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 2002. Municipal Engineering & Water Resources Services

**Information and Privacy Act to be Amended**

On March 5th, the provincial government in introduced Bill 7, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 2002. The minister also stated that “the changes in Bill 7 are accepted by stakeholders and provide immediate improvements to the legislation and response to the legislative committee’s recommendations.” The Bill will set the stage for further amendments in ensuing legislative sessions, resulting from a comprehensive review of the act and the need to provide a solid and evolving foundation for electronic government and electronic commerce.

The minister also noted that the Bill “will address compliance and cost-reduction issues and recognize and facilitate compliance with recent budgets.”

**PRINCE GEORGE MAYOR SPEARHEADS SOFTWOOD PETITION**

Stalls in the softwood lumber talks have resulted in one BC Mayor’s campaign to pressure the United States to resolve the issue. Prince George Mayor Colin Kinsley has started a petition against the US’s stumpage dumping and countervailing duties imposed on Canadian lumber after writing a letter to President Bush earlier this year requesting his intervention in resolving the softwood dispute. The petition reads:

The participation in this electronic petition will assist Canadians in a resolution to this ongoing dispute. Your name will add strength to the Mayor’s written request to the president asking him to intervene as quickly as possible, to the fullest extent permitted to his office under American law.”

To date over 30,500 signatures have been collected and with the assistance of other organizations and groups, Mayor Kinsley’s goal is to collect over 250,000 signatures. Kinsley hopes that the signatures can be delivered to the U.S. President directly, using the www.city.pg.bc.ca.

**UBCM Members Consider Proposed Forest Policy Changes**

On February 7-8, 2002 some 100 UBCM members met in Richmond to discuss the proposed forest policy changes put forward by the provincial government late last year. The proposed changes represent the provincial government’s New Era commitment to address the challenges facing the forest industry but they also form the basis of BC’s proposal to the United States as part of the softwood lumber discussions.

The conference, sponsored by the Community Resources and Information and Privacy Act was held to provide local governments with an opportunity to consider the forest policy changes and their impacts. The purpose of the conference was two-fold:

1. Increase member awareness of:
   - state of the BC forest industry and its challenges;
   - proposed forest policy changes and their impacts

2. Develop a UBCM response and recommendations to proposed, and future proposals for forest policy change.

Delegates heard from a number of speakers on the first day to assist them in understanding the details and implications of the proposed changes.

Speakers included:
- Dr. Peter Pearse, who provided an overview of the state of the BC industry;
- Forests Minister Michael de Jong, who provided an overview of the proposed forest policy changes;
- Various industry, labour and forest sector representatives provided their perspective on the proposals and their impacts.

Representatives included:
- Duncan Davies, President and CEO, International Forest Products;
- Brian McNaughton, General Manager, Federation of BC Woodlot Associations;
- Blair Robertson, General Manager, Private Forest Landowners Association;
- Dave Jones, Second Vice-President, IWA; Rick Jeffery, President, Truck Loggers Association; Roy Nagel, General Manager, Central Interior Logging Association; George Cousineau, Vancouver Island Wood Processors and Dave Zirnhelt, Logging Industry Association of BC.

During the second day, delegates turned their attention to discussing what impact the proposed changes would have on communities. Through round table discussions a series of draft recommendations were developed that were reviewed by the members in attendance. Delegates made some recommendations in regard to:
- establishing transition strategies and assistance for communities;
- revising the stumpage system;
- cut control provisions;
- how to address the unique problems facing the coast versus the interior forest industry;
- removal of the appurtenance clause;
- First Nations involvement in the current forest policy discussion;
- community participation in the management and utilization of forest resources; and
- establishing a results-based Forest Practices Code.

The summary recommendations are presently being reviewed by the UBCM Executive. Once complete, the full conference report, including the summary recommendations will be conveyed to the Minister of Forests and will be posted to the UBCM website at www.civicnet.gov.bc.ca.

**BC Mayors Join Softwood Delegation in Ottawa**

Seven BC mayors took their concerns about the softwood lumber issue to Ottawa as part of a delegation headed by provincial Forests Minister Michael de Jong. BC Mayors making the trip included:
- Connie Lonsdale, Mayor of Squamish
- Garry Fumey, Mayor of Port McNeill
- Steve Wallace, Mayor of Qualicum
- Lon Fox, Mayor of Vanderhoof
- Ross Priest, Mayor of Cranbrook
- Russ Helberg, Mayor of Port Hardy
- Ken McRae, Mayor of Port Alberni

Also joining the delegation were other members of the legislative assembly, representatives of First Nations, labour and the forest industry. The delegation met with International Trade Minister Peter Pettigrew, Natural Resources Minister Herb Dhaliwal, Finance Minister Paul Martin and other elected federal officials on March 11, 2002. The purpose of the delegation was to raise awareness about the current plight of the BC forest sector.

**Developing Winning Strategies for Local Government Information Technology**

The public sector in British Columbia is undergoing dramatic changes that will ultimately have significant implications for the local government sector. In this environment, local governments are increasingly looking to ensure information technology as a means to achieve service delivery and value delivery. This increasing reliance on information technology requires effective, long-range planning to ensure that systems are operationally efficient, well integrated and managed for the long term.

KPMG’s Risk and Advisory Services practice has extensive experience assisting local governments with the development of long-term strategic IT plans that address IT Governance, management, staffing, business opportunities, hardware and software acquisition and implementation, business process integration, user support and training, and project management. KPMG can also provide assistance with vendor selection and project risk management.

For further information on how KPMG’s Risk and Advisory Services professionals can assist you, please contact Gordon Drum at (604) 480-3563 or by email gordon.drum@kpmg.ca.
UBCM PRESIDENT APPEARS BEFORE SENATE COMMITTEE

On March 25, 2002, UBCM President Hans Cunningham appeared before the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications to provide the local government perspective on the Special Study on Inter-City Busing. The Senate Committee was directed by the federal government to hold hearings across the country on a number of issues relating to scheduled bus service between communities.

Over the past 12 years, the federal government has tried to tackle the issue but because the powers to regulate the bus industry were delegated to the provinces, attempts by the federal government to take that power back in order to deregulate across Canada have not succeeded. This is due to the fact that the level of regulation within the provinces varies and provinces, such as BC, which presently exercise a significant amount of economic regulation on the industry, have been reluctant to give up that power. However, other provinces such as PEI, Newfoundland, Ontario, Alberta have either deregulated busing or continue to maintain only a few controls on the industry.

When the issue most recently arose back in 1998-1999, the BC provincial government convened a number of stakeholders including UBCM to discuss the matter. At that time, UBCM’s Small Community Representative, Bob Balcaen from McBride, represented UBCM at the workshop. On behalf of the membership Councilor Balcaen highlighted a number of concerns about bus deregulation and the impact that it would have for BC’s smaller, more remote rural communities. These were the same issues President Cunningham brought forward to the Senate Committee.

Briefly, these included:

- limited or no other transportation options
- for many small communities, bus service is the mode of transportation for the elderly, students, income disadvantaged and others that either do not have access to a vehicle or are unable to drive.
- bus service provides an alternative where courier services do not operate
- provides local employment opportunities - bus depots require ticket takers, package sorters, all of which contribute jobs to a local community economy.
- buses enhance tourism opportunities - presently some ferry and rail services are coordinated with bus service to facilitate tourism in the more rural and remote areas of the province creating economic development opportunities.
- local government experience in other transportation sectors - airport deregulation has caused significant costs, both regulatory and administrative for those local governments that took over air ports from the federal government.

Following his presentation, President Cunningham was thanked for his advice and he received a number of questions from Senate Committee members.

UBCM would appreciate receiving copies of any material you may submit to the Committee for our records as well.

Taylor Community Hall sets a bright standard

Taylor may be a small community, but that didn’t stop the people responsible for building a new community hall from exploring creative options for their new building.

When the District of Taylor embarked on a building project to replace their aging community hall, they knew they wanted something durable, yet attractive. Thanks to the innovative use of wood by architect Mike Slater of Scheunhage H.J. & Associates of Grande Prairie, Alberta, they have a durable building that definitely warrants a second look.

The 12,000 square foot structure encompasses a large community room that can double as a gymnasium, a full kitchen, bar space, small office area and public washrooms. The design incorporates a possible addition of a medical clinic.

Mike Slater
Scheunhage H.J. & Associates of Grande Prairie, Alberta

For many small communities, bus service is the mode of transportation for the elderly, students, income disadvantaged and others that either do not have access to a vehicle or are unable to drive.

Mayor Fred Jarvis said the old community hall was well used, and predicts the new one will also be a popular meeting place.

"A lot of people from around the area used it for many, many things - meetings, banquets, church services and a lot of weddings and anniversaries," Jarvis said.

The importance of the forest industry to the economy of BC is no secret to the people of Taylor, so a decision to build the new hall out of wood was made in the early stages of planning. The hall is wood framed, has a wood roof system and wood floor system. But the most innovative use of wood is displayed on the interior walls.

"We needed a strong, durable product for the interior walls of the hall, so we put OSB (oriented strand board) as a wainscot on the interior walls, going up 12 feet," said architect Mike Slater. "We sanded and clear-stained the OSB, cut it into four-foot sheets and placed them on the diagonal with an inch between each sheet."

Behind the OSB is drywall, which was painted blue. The vivid blue drywall shows through in strips between the OSB panels, providing a striking visual effect.

(Oriented strand board (OSB) consists of wood strands, approximately four inches long, which are bonded with adhesives to form a mat. As in plywood, these mats are layered and oriented perpendicular to each other for maximum strength, stiffness and stability. OSB is widely used as a construction sheathing, web material for wood I-joists or as structural membranes of structural insulated panels.)

Taylor’s public works superintendent Gordon Davies is optimistic the OSB will reduce costs resulting from damage.

"It will be very durable and it is aesthetically very pleasing," Davies said. "The underside of the roof is OSB sheathing and is stained green. The colour is visible above the open trusses which have been left in their natural state."

The decision to extensively utilize wood was overwhelmingly supported by the residents of Taylor.

"The wood business is an important part of our community. It’s just an excellent product. It’s one of the oldest products as far as building goes and in most cases comes out better than other products," Jarvis said.
GETTING BLUE PAGES RIGHT

More often than not, Canadians turn to their phones when they want to contact the Government of Canada. So, getting the phone service right is crucial to increasing Canadians` satisfaction with the quality of government service.

We all know how it used to be. Suppose you had a question about university student loans for your college-age daughter. You would turn to the telephone directory blue pages for the federal government and see a list of departments. Then, you’d have to decide which was the most likely place to deal with student loans. If you were right, there would still be a few phone calls before you got to the right person.

Now, it’s changing. People-friendly phone service is a key element in a broad strategy for the modernization of government service to Canadians through the Internet, in person, and by phone.

A guiding principle is that services should be presented to the public in the way that Canadians would naturally search for them. And the service approach should be consistent across channels – phone, Internet, and in-person access centres.

So, in redesigning government phone services, the Government of Canada is working to ensure they make sense to Canadians and that responses are timely. In other words, better phone service means easier access to services for Canadians and improved performance.

“The key to improved phone service is to look at what we do from a citizen perspective,” says Jim Page, Director of Innovation and Quality Services at the Treasury Board Secretariat. “If you have a question you want answered, you will want to go to the correct source right away. Chances are, you’d look under ‘pensions’ – not a department – if you had a pensions question. And, you’d want an answer today – not tomorrow.”

NEW FORMAT

One important step to improving government phone service is to redesign the blue pages portion of commercial telephone directories. The new format makes government blue pages sections easier to use by listing services by subject using keywords rather than by department and program. The Government of Canada has recently completed the redesign of federal listings printed in the blue page portion of all 145 master telephone directories published across Canada.

Some provincial, municipal and First Nations governments have joined with the federal government to create an integrated, intergovernmental blue pages, which makes it even easier for citizens to find the services they want.

Federal, provincial, municipal and First Nations blue pages have already been launched in most Ontario directories. The Yukon directory boasts integrated government listings involving federal, territorial, municipal and First Nations governments. And the Northwest Territories is following suit. Quebec and Newfoundland are proceeding with redesigned but not integrated directories. In Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia blue pages integrate federal and provincial numbers in a citizen-centred, keyword directory. Integrated government listings pilots are also proceeding in British Columbia and Saskatchewan.

Similar arrangements are being discussed in other parts of the country.

Blue pages in British Columbia are published in 23 master directories (fexus replicates these listings in several other directories). Federal government listings in all these directories were redesigned in 2001 but distribution to the public of the Bulkley Valley, Kitimat-Terrace, and Queen Charlotte directories (Squamish and Salmon Arm) – at which point a local government is required to pay for 40% of the policing costs. In the end only Salmon Arm went over the threshold point and will have to pay a minimum 20% increase in its policing costs.

The new blue pages directories are visible symbols of better phone service. Canadians were consulted through focus group testing on community economic and social health. This will be expressed in:

- office closures (agriculture, possibly some government agents, energy and mines, human resources, land titles, forests, various Solicitor General offices);
- improved health of community businesses; and
- increased funding for non-profit organizations providing local services in social fields.

For further information:
Refer to UBCM In the House Circulars.

December 2001 – Provincial Government Restructuring - Implications for Local Government
February 17 – Provincial Budget Address
March 13 - Local Government transfers announced
See also in this issue:
• Court house closures (pg 11)
• Police costs (pages 9 & 11)

Census 2001 – What About Policing Costs?

The new census figures for 2001 show that no new communities went over the 5,000 population threshold – at which point a local government is currently required to pay for 70% of the policing costs. There were four communities (Creston, Metchosin, Kent and Fernie) who were initially thought to be over the 5,000 threshold before the census, but all of them finished below the threshold level for financing policing costs.

Core Review

Some other areas where provincial decisions will impact local governments include:
- reduction in MSP/pharmacare coverage may increase costs to local government as employers.
- Ministry will not respond to low risk human-wildlife conflicts.
- increase local government control of low risk floodplain management.
- involve local communities in management of local ecosystems.

Other Implications

The third lens by which to examine the announce-ments is the potential for community groups to react to provincial cuts by seeking local government support. Some of these areas might be:
- victim assistance, BC Festival of the Arts, search and rescue training, national record searches, camping and recreation facilities at lower use parks.
- A subject to keep watch on is moves to “local devo- lution” issues.
- devolution of heritage properties to local authorities.
- maintenance of Forest recreation and trail sites.
- devolution of water utility regulation.
- forestry fire protection model now identifies municipal govern- ment, reduced low-priority emergency calls (H48) to other resources (and reduce paramedic staff).

Implications for Communities Generally

The final, fourth, lens for analysis of the Provincial Government’s decisions is on community economic and social health. This will be expressed in:

A social safety net for the local communities (edible plants, possibly some government agents, energy and mines, human resources, land titles, forest management, various Solicitor General offices);
- improved health of community businesses; and
- increased funding for non-profit organizations providing local services in social fields.

For further information:
Refer to UBCM In the House Circulars.

January 18 – Major Provincial Government Restructuring - Implications for Local Government
February 17 – Provincial Budget Address
March 13 - Local Government transfers announced
See also in this issue:
• Court house closures (pg 11)
• Police costs (pages 9 & 11)

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Resolutions Committee

LET’S DO THAT AGAIN!

Executive plans to complete all 2002 resolutions and increase attendance at policy sessions

We did it! With your support and the commitment of the Resolutions Committee, all resolutions were debated at the 2001 Convention. Delegates' comments indicated their pleasure with this achievement, and we plan to do it again. Indeed – the resolutions and policy papers are the lifeblood of the organization and we need to ensure that our policy matters are considered at convention where we can receive the best debate and input from the membership. Members' concerns regarding last year’s sessions focused on attendance, particularly reduced on the Friday, raising concern that policy matters were not being considered by the majority of the membership. We looked at the root causes of low attendance and determined that programming at last year’s convention may have contributed to low attendance. We hope to ensure there are many incentives to attend policy making and resolutions sessions, by ensuring the smooth flow of resolutions and by working with the Convention Committee to improve the plenary environment.

The Resolutions Committee has confirmed that its objectives for 2002 are to complete all resolutions in the allocated time frame at the Convention; to improve the process of resolutions consideration and to work to improve attendance at the policy sessions. In order to meet those objectives the Committee has determined:

• That 7.5 hours be allocated for resolutions and policy paper discussion (as in 2001).
• That a “short-form” Procedures for Handling Resolutions be drafted to make the procedures more accessible, and to shorten the introductory session.
• That session Chairs ensure speakers adhere to their allocated time and that members refrain from repetitive debate.
• That the Committee continue with current technological improvements.
• That a request be made to members that those who have submitted resolutions ensure a representative of the sponsoring local government is present to introduce the resolution to the floor at Convention.
• That the Resolutions Committee work with the Convention Committee to identify and mitigate root causes of low attendance; looking at programming and the benefit of improving the plenary environment.
• That an amendment be made to section 6.3 (b) of the Executive Policy to provide for the further delineation of Section B resolutions into three parts in order to ensure that those new policy issues in Section B that are within local jurisdiction are debated first:
  • Part I – Resolutions to be Considered as a Block (as is the case now);
  • Part II – Resolutions within the Jurisdiction of Local Government for Individual Debate; and
  • Part III – Resolutions of Concern to Local Communities for Individual Debate.

As a reminder, the deadline for submission of resolutions to UBCM is June 30, 2002.

National Conference
Child and Youth Friendly Communities Challenges and Achievements
May 15 - 18, 2002
University of B.C., Vancouver

The Question: How child and youth friendly is our community? How can we make it more so?

The Answer: Can be found by joining with representatives of communities from across Canada and around the world who recognize the importance of local communities in the growth and healthy development of children and youth.

Program includes keynote addresses by Dr. Jams Garbarino, an international panel moderated by Dr. Roger Hart with representatives from Sweden, Scotland, Belgium and New Zealand, and over forty workshops.

This conference will appeal to a broad range of organizations and individuals: e.g. everyone working with or for children and youth including – municipal administrators and planners – youth and youth workers – early childhood specialists – workers in the health, social service and justice fields – educators and recreationists – researchers with interests in the development of children and youth and the design of communities – community leaders – business representatives – parent organizations.

Conference information and registration details are available from the Society for Children and Youth of B.C. Website: www.scyofbc.org or e-mail: scy@portal.ca or phone: 604 433-4180.
The provincial government has announced that rural/small communities will be expected to pay for policing costs and that this will be phased in over the next three years starting in 2003. The decision to impose policing costs on rural areas and small communities has raised a number of important issues for local government.

The first issue is the ability of small communities and rural areas to pay for policing and the impact that these increased costs would have on the community. Outlined below is an illustration of the concerns raised by local government:

**New Denver**

“Preliminary figures suggest that New Denver residents will probably face municipal tax increases of over 80% to pay for a force that is already over duty in our village less than four hours a day.”

**Alert Bay**

“In 1999 our tax arrears were at 70% of one years levy, in 2000 that was reduced to 62% and again at the end of 2001 we face 62% in arrears. As you can see from these figures our community cannot afford a tax increase.”

**Wells**

“The cost per capita for this function for smaller communities, such as ours with less than 200 year round residents, would exceed the ability of our citizens to pay.”

The Chief Judge in responding to the proposed changes noted two very important issues related to the closure of these court houses. The first point is that a large portion of the Provincial Court’s work involves matters of an urgent or emergent nature, such as child apprehensions, restraining orders, applications for peace bonds under section 810 of the Criminal Code, bail applications, domestic violence cases, and young offender matters. Such matters require accommodation within a tight or legislatively mandated time frame, so Court and Registry accessibility is of paramount importance.

The second point of importance is that:

The judiciary is a separate branch of government. As such, it has equal responsibility with the Attorney General for the administration of justice in the Court.

The report points out a number of concerns regarding potential community impacts that court house closures could have around the province, outlined is a sample of some of the issues raised:

- **Cariboo (100 Mile House)**

  Members of the public who wish to access the courts on family and small claims matters will be actively discouraged from doing so by the closure of the courthouse in the 100 Mile House and the attendant difficulty in dealing with a distant Registry, and the costs of both time and money going to Williams Lake.

- **Kamloops (Chase, Lillooet, Lytton, Merritt)**

  Kamloops. Access to an automobile is not universal. Poverty is widespread in these areas. . . .

  The attendance of the necessary police witnesses is a matter of concern. These communities are not excessively policed. In such a case, a few members of the RCMP keep the peace in a large geographic area. Regular absence of the members to a location one or two hours from the detachment may result in an unacceptably low police presence in the communities on court days.”

- **North Fraser (Maple Ridge, Burnaby)**

  The district has an approximate total population of 303,892 that will be serviced by only two courthouses after the closures.

  The cost to the Burnaby City of having police officers go from Burnaby to Port Coquitlam will be substantial. This is a reflection of the amount of time required for a round trip, for giving evidence, delivering prisoners, serving information or applying for Judge warrants.

- **Okanagan Area (Oliver, Princeton, Revelstoke, Chase)**

  The court closures will have a detrimental effect on the general public and the lawyers who practice in those centres. It could well mean the forced closure of law offices in these communities with the result that people have a very limited access to legal advice.

  The most significant concern remains the Salmon Arm courthouse. It is currently full. In January 2002, for example, more than 9 court days were moved to Chase or Vernon. The facility is clearly inadequate. There is no wheelchair access. Prisoners remain chained to iron loops in the wall since there is only one holding cell. The one washroom is shared by prisoners and the public alike. It is not a facility that can accommodate cases from Revelstoke. Any case over 3 days will have to be moved to Vernon, which is also currently full.”

Chief Judge Carol Baird Ellan in releasing the report, outlined the judiciary’s expectations in resolving this issue.

The judiciary expects that issues arising from the proposed courthouse closures will be resolved in the spirit of open communication and mutual respect that has been historically enjoyed between the Court and the Office of the Attorney General, in a manner that maintains the confidence in the administration of justice, and ensures that the public is provided the optimum level of justice delivery and access as may be achieved within the applicable constitutional framework and the available resources.
Environment

Streamside Protection Regulation

The Honourable Joyce Murray, Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection in November 2001 established the Streamside Protection Regulation Advisory Committee charged with “advising government on how to implement the Streamside Protection Regulation in a manner that ensures that fish habitat is protected yet flexible to meet local circumstances; is practical to implement within the resources of the provincial and local governments and minimizes the impacts on the value of property.”

The UBCM has indicated to the Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection that it would support a regulation that provided the following:

- needed building blocks toward the development of a sustainable community;
- delivery of an integrated ministry program based on the best available science;
- framework for comprehensive decision making between the three levels of government, who are accountable for the land, water and fish protection issues;
- flexible and adaptive approach for development – sets clear environmental outcomes to be met and provides for discretion as to how to achieve these outcomes;
- ensures a one window approach to development approval – saving both time and money for the development industry and local government;
- meets the objectives of the Federal Fisheries Act, thus avoiding potential liability problems and delays in the approval process;
- strategic framework for ensuring that the measures used in a community, be it a watershed approach or other, provide the right balance between fish protection and development in the area.

The UBCM continued to stress the need for the federal and provincial government to provide the technical assistance and financial resources required for local government to implement the regulation at the community level. The provincial government is expected to complete its review of the Streamside Protection Regulation and decide whether or not it supports the approach outlined in the regulation to protect fish habitat in the upcoming months.

Drinking Water Protection

On September 25, 2001, Joyce Murray, Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection and Colin Hansen, Minister of Health Services, appointed an independent review panel to provide recommendations on the completeness, effectiveness and efficiency of the Drinking Water Protection Act (DWPA). These recommendations are to be used to confirm, amend or repeal the legislation and guide implementation.

The Ministers wanted to:

a. Verify if the legislation provides an effective risk management framework for safe drinking water in a cost-effective manner;
b. Make sure the Act is streamlined and results-based;
c. Make certain that there are measurable goals, defined responsibilities and clear accountability for implementation.

The Panel was chaired by David Marshall, Executive Director of the Fraser Basin Council and had four other representatives from public health, environment, industry and local government interests. Chair Robert Hobson was the local government representative on this Committee.

The Drinking Water Review Panel issued a final report with 26 recommendations regarding the Drinking Water Protection Act (Bill 20) on February 13, 2002. In conduct

Environmental Shorts

Road Salt

Road salts were identified for a scientific assessment of their impact on the environment in 1995 as a result of recommendations from an expert panel that established the Priority Substances List under CEPA. A five-year study concluded that because of high releases around storage and snow disposal sites and through runoff and splash from roadways into soil, streams and rivers, road salts are harmful to the environment. The assessment was restricted to ecological effects as the expert panel judged that there was no evidence of human health effects. Environment Canada has recommended that road salts, which contain inorganic chloride salts with or without ferrocyanide salts, be added to Schedule 1 under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA). Consultations will be launched in 2002 on better ways to manage road salts so that harm to the environment is reduced. Under CEPA, the government has two years to develop management measures to reduce the impact of road salts on the environment. A broad range of management actions will be studied, including, improved application technologies, and better storage and handling techniques. These measures will be selected and developed by the Government of Canada with input from and building upon work already done by some provinces and territories; and with stakeholders, including municipalities, transportation and road maintenance authorities, the road salt industry and environmental groups.

Grizzly Bear Hunt

The Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection announced on July 16, 2001, that the blanket moratorium on grizzly bear hunting would be lifted and replaced with regional moratoriums based on recommendations from a scientific peer review panel. A panel consisting of six scientists is in the process of reviewing the grizzly bear population in the province to determine what the population is and which areas of the province grizzly bear hunts will continue to be allowed. The review is scheduled to be complete by December 2002.

Provincial Parks

The provincial government has indicated that it intends to close some 50 parks in the province which are viewed as uneconomical to maintain. It is anticipated that a further 50 to 60 parks will be offered to the federal government and/or local governments to operate in various areas of the province. The remaining parks will be operated by the provincial government on a business basis, with the intent of maximizing the revenue and commercial opportunities that might exist in the specific area.

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Since 1980 our firm has restricted its practice to acting for local government and providing advice concerning municipal law to other clients.
Health Regions Reorganized

On December 12, 2001 the Ministry of Health Planning announced the re-structuring of BC’s health care system. The stated purpose is to achieve a more streamlined governance and administrative structure. UBCM received notification by fax on the day that the decision was made.

The province’s 52 former health authorities have become five Regional Health Authorities (responsible for 15 Health Service Delivery Areas) and a Provincial Health Services Authority. The five Regional Health Authorities are: Fraser, Interior, North, Vancouver Coastal, and Vancouver Island.

BC Reg. 293/2001, which is Ministerial Order No. M297 under the Health Authorities Act, lays out the details of how the new Regional Health Authorities are structured geographically. Schedule A to the Regulation identifies the new boards and their former constituent health authorities. This regulation may be found on the Internet at: http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ubcm/2001/HealthAuthority293-2001.pdf

Ministry of Health Services staff advise that (in their view) the only Regional Hospital District that will experience any issues associated with its service area will be the Cariboo, in and around the Quesnel area. This is where the split takes place between the Northern Health Authority and the Interior Health Authority.

The province’s 52 former health authorities have become five Regional Health Authorities (responsible for 15 Health Service Delivery Areas) and a Provincial Health Services Authority. The five Regional Health Authorities are: Fraser, Interior, North, Vancouver Coastal, and Vancouver Island.

Impact on Regional Hospital Districts

In addition to the impacts of service levels in our communities, UBCM is also principally concerned with the effect of the health region reorganization on the operation of the 25 Regional Hospital Districts.

Although each Region operates differently, it has not become apparent that there has yet been significant operational contact between the new Regional Authorities and the Regional Hospital Districts (RHDs) in their areas, in spite of the fact that Regional Hospital District budgets will soon be finalized.

UBCM formulated its specific concerns in the form of a series of questions which have been put before Ministry staff, with minimal response to date:

a. Will RHDs be represented on the new Regional Boards, now being recruited?

b. Are there any changes anticipated/plan for RHDs in the future?

c. How will RHDs operate with the new Regional Authorities in the long term, during the short term transition period?

d. Have RHDs received communications from the Ministry and/or the new Regional Authorities about what they are supposed to be dealing with and how?

e. What do the reorganizations mean to this year’s RHD budgets – is there a plan for dealing with this year’s capital allocations?

f. How will multiple RHDs share project costs within their new amalgamated Health Regions? How will they be accountable to their local taxpayers for regional projects? Who decides what’s local and what’s regional?

g. What is the provincial government’s role now in dealing with health capital planning?

h. When is the Capital Cost Sharing study going to take place?

These concerns are also being conveyed to the Health Ministers and a meeting with UBCM is being requested. It is UBCM’s intention to organize a meeting of RHDs and Ministry staff to discuss reorganization problems and concerns.

Health

Province Revises Smoking Regulations

On January 16, 2002, the provincial government announced its decision to revise the Workers’ Compensation Board regulations on environmental tobacco smoke. According to the decision, the revised regulation allows workers to enter designated smoking rooms up to a maximum of 20% of their shift, although employees must consent to work in those areas. The original regulation did not allow workers to enter those rooms except in emergencies or to investigate illegal activity.

Other features of the new regulation include:

- Employee workstations cannot be located in a smoking room;
- Hospitality and gaming establishments that choose to allow smoking on their premises must have separate rooms for smoking and non-smoking customers;
- Smoking rooms must be structurally separate and can be no more than 40% of total floor space in hospitality settings and 65% in bingo halls; and
- Air from smoking rooms must either be ventilated directly to the outside or cleansed through a system that meets a minimum standard of 65% operating efficiency at a 0.3 micrometer particle size.

The new regulations come into effect on May 1, 2002.

The revised regulation does not override municipal bylaws that prohibit smoking in more than 25 local governments in the Lower Mainland, on southern Vancouver Island, and on some of the Gulf Islands.

A number of local governments had previously indicated that they were waiting to see the outcome of the provincial regulatory review of smoking regulations, and are now considering revising their own bylaws which regulate smoking in public places.


Continued on page 18
Financial Policy

FCM and World Trade Negotiations

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) advises that it is acting on members’ concerns about the potential effect of international trade negotiations on municipal powers.

FCM-commissioned legal analysis has concluded that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the general Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) may affect municipal regulatory authority to develop land use plans, apply zoning controls, set procurement policy and to enter into public-private partnerships.

In FCM’s view, these concerns must be addressed before the federal government moves forward with further negotiations. The municipal sector must be indemnified and held harmless from any constraining effects of trade agreements, especially as regards their actions, while conforming to domestic law, trigger trade actions.

At its September 2001 meeting, the FCM National Board of Directors resolved to begin discussions with federal trade officials urging that municipal concerns be raised at international trade meetings.

FCM and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) have convened a joint working group to identify those features of trade agreements that could affect municipal government, and arrive at agreements satisfying municipal concerns.

Members of the committee met with International Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew and senior staff from DFAIT, Finance, and Industry Canada in November 2001. Further meetings of senior officials were held on December 19, January 18, and February 8. The group expects that the Minister will announce “substantial

progress” at the FCM Annual Conference in June this year.

More information on this issue can be found on the FCM web site (www.fcm.ca) under the heading “World Trade.” Of particular interest might be the paper presented at the November meeting with Minister Pettigrew which outlines in some depth, a variety of municipal questions on trade agreements for which responses are being sought from the government.

It is hoped that at the NCG in Hamilton, the Minister, in addition to providing a progress report, will also provide satisfactory answers to these questions and indicate the federal intention with respect to indemnification.

Agreement on Internal Trade: Local Governments to Implement MASH Annex

On July 18, 2001, the provincial Cabinet decided as part of its initiative on open tendering, to also extend the procurement provisions of the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) – the so-called “MASH Annex” – to cover the MASH sector entities, which include local governments. The new provisions would come into effect for local governments on March 31, 2002. BC local governments had previously been exempted from these provisions, a position which had been supported by UBCM.

UBCM then undertook to consult with BC local governments with the intent of advising Minister Abbott of any implementation concerns raised by members. The responses from members took two forms: political and technical.

There were a large number of those responding who voiced significant concern over the government’s decision to include local government under the terms of the AIT, without notice or consultation with UBCM. The second most prevalent comment was how the effect of the decision is to reduce local government’s powers and authorities, which is viewed as a contradiction of the independent, autonomous order of government principles of the Local Government Act and also of the newly announced Community Charter.

Another very prominent concern is that the AIT process will open local governments up to having procurements challenged under a formal dispute resolution process, which has potentially significant costs attached to local governments having to defend their decisions and practices. The UBCM Executive felt that this concern can be addressed by one of the recommended modifications that it has put forward to the government.

At its meeting of January 24-25, 2002, the UBCM Executive reviewed a report on the consultation process and resolved to forward the following recommendations to the provincial government with respect to the implementation of the Agreement on Internal Trade obligations by local governments:

a. That the provincial government fulfill its commitment to assisting local governments on the following implementation matters:

• training local governments on the use of BC Bid, the provincial government’s procurement web site, for local governments to post their tenders;

b. That the provincial government commit to continue to make the BC Bid service (or any future equivalent) available to local government at no cost, as is presently the case;

c. That local governments and other MASH sector organizations will be consulted prior to any anticipated amendments to the AIT, including revision of the dispute resolution provisions;

d. That local governments will be directly involved in any provincial efforts to harmonize terms and conditions in tender documents or to standardize complaint process procedures;

e. That the province confirm that its inclusion of local governments in the AIT, if indemnifies local governments and saves them harmless from any protest actions taken against them under the AIT, and commits to bear all costs arising from any protest against a local government procurement measure or policy that is taken in good faith.

Copies of the consultation report and letter conveying the recommendations to Minister Abbott has also been forwarded to all local governments, which has generated further comments from members.

It is UBCM’s understanding that Minister Abbott will be sending out letters to all local governments reminding them about the March 31, 2002 deadline to implement the new procurement obligations. Government staff from the Ministry of Competitiveness, Science and Enterprise (Trade Policy Branch) and the BC Purchasing Commission will be available to assist local governments with their implementation concerns. Local governments have been advised that the province’s electronic tendering service, BC Bid (www.bcbid.ca) is available to local governments at no charge.
NEW AGREEMENT WITH UBCM

MINISTER PLANT COMMITS TO NEW AGREEMENT WITH UBCM

The UBCM Aboriginal Affairs Committee met with Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Treaty Negotiations, the Hon. Geoff Plant, and Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women’s Services, the Hon. George Abbott, on March 1, 2002 in Vancouver to discuss the future of local government participation in the treaty process. Committee member Councillor Mary Ashley advised that a recent conference call with Treaty Advisory Committee Chairs around the province revealed local governments’ need for clarity about their role. Uncertainty has been spurred by the recently announced elimination of Treaty Advisory Committee (TAC) funding and the planned shift in the province’s consultation approach, mentioned in Minister letter to TAC members on January 28, 2002.

In response, Minister Plant emphasized that his government is committed to ensuring that local governments are as actively involved in treaty making as possible. The importance of their involvement is not in question he said. Dion suggested that the Province negotiate a restructuring agreement defining future local government participation in the treaty process. He envisioned this building on and ultimately replacing the 1993 and 1994 agreements that UBCM currently has with the province, Mayor Don Bell reviewed some of the essential components of the agreement from a UBCM perspective:

- Recognition of local government’s unique interest and critical role in the negotiation and implementation of treaties (1993 MOU)
- Provincial commitment to local government participation and structured consultation
- Representation on provincial negotiating team
- Participation at main tables and side tables
- Structuring participation: Defining roles and responsibilities
- Links to Interim Measures Protocol

Minister Plant agreed to negotiate a new agreement and noted that these components were useful as a menu or framework for constructing a new agreement.

Mayor Corinne Lonsdale raised the issue of provincial funding for local government involvement. She agreed with the Minister that process which is not efficient or cost-effective should not be continued. However, she advised that a collective approach to local government involvement, such as the current TAC process, is effective not just in terms of dollars, but also by ensuring local governments do not provide contradictory advice to provincial negotiators and that the messages the provincial teams receive are based on the considered interests of local government. She added that local governments believe they are contributing significant funds now to their participation in the treaty process.

The Minister advised that he would not reinstate TAC funding. He did, however, acknowledge a valid concern when local governments in more remote areas (e.g. Central Coast, North) are unable to participate because of costs. He stated that there could be selected funding provided by the province, noting the possibility of this being included in the agreement with UBCM.

Development of the agreement will start immediately and UBCM will keep members updated on its progress.
TREATY PROCESS
CHANGES UNDERWAY

Minister Plant emphasized that product not process in treaty negotiations was his number one priority, at a recent meeting with the UBCM Aboriginal Affairs Committee. He told Committee members that while the province will continue to have a presence at every treaty negotiation table, the amount of resources they put into a particular negotiation will be determined by whether they see a realistic possibility of achieving results. The Treaty Negotiation office will be using the majority of their resources for the treaty tables themselves and will avoid creating other structures that are non-productive and self-perpetuating.

The strategies listed in the Treaty Negotiation Office's Service Plan illustrate how policy and treaty making activities appear to be on hold until after the referendum on treaty negotiations, which is to be mailed out to B.C. households starting on April 2.

- Analyze and implement referendum results
- Following the referendum, develop negotiation options and models that allow for choice on how to deal with the land question, each agreement with Canada and First Nations

The Haida Nation case was an application for judicial review of the decision of the Minister of Forests to issue replacement tree farm licences to Redfern Resources Ltd. in Taku River Tlingit First Nation's Tulsequah Chief Mine Project. The Haida Nation, in a case application, argued that the Crown had no legal or moral obligation to consult with First Nations who have asserted, but not proved, aboriginal rights or title. Put simply, consultation with First Nations affected by decisions of the Crown must be higher, wider, deeper and sooner than previously expected.

In two recent decisions of the British Columbia Court of Appeal, Council of the Haida Nation v. Minister of Forests and Weyerhaeuser Company Limited and Taku River Tlingit First Nation v. Tulsequah Chief Mine Project, the Court has clarified the duty of the Crown and third parties to consult with First Nations who have asserted, but not proved, aboriginal rights or title. Put simply, consultation with First Nations affected by decisions of the Crown must be higher, wider, deeper and sooner than previously expected.
A lack of balance is a common problem in meetings, where often only a few individuals take up most of the time. Sometimes they dominate because they are very knowledgeable on the issues at hand. Other times they dominate because they are passionate about their views and are effective at asserting themselves. Whatever the reason for the dominated discussions, quieter individuals are often left behind and accept a lack of balance as a fact of life. Meeting chairs hesitate to intervene for fear of offending dominant members.

There are various negative impacts of a lack of balance in meetings. One is that less assertive individuals get frustrated and wonder why they attend meetings if their views, ideas, and unique insights are not even heard. Another consequence is that discussions become repetitive and narrowly focused. Worse yet, the quality of the group's decisions suffers. Indeed, without input from "quieter" but "no less wise" members of the group, the organization may later regret. A lack of balance in meetings can lead to making bad decisions which will later regret. A lack of balance is risky for the organization.

How can "the scale" be balanced? How can "the playing field" be made more even? There are two types of interventions to help you achieve balance in your meetings:

1. Preventive and proactive interventions (before the meeting)

A preventive or proactive intervention is what you do before a meeting to prevent a negative outcome or achieve a positive outcome. Here are a few preventive interventions to help ensure balance in your meetings:

- 1. As many individuals as possible should be given pre-meeting assignments. For example, a quiet member can be asked to research a given topic, prepare a report, present it at the meeting, and facilitate a discussion on it. Balance would be achieved by design, and not just by hoping for it.

- 2. Dominant individuals can be approached before a meeting and requested to help ensure balance in your meetings:

1. At the start of the meeting, the Chair can acknowledge the significance of the issues and the importance of hearing as many different views as possible. The issues we’re dealing with today are complex and difficult. To make good decisions, we need to hear as many different views as possible. In the past, I noticed that some of you tend to speak up more often than others. At this meeting, I would asked everyone to make room for those who normally speak less, so we can have balanced discussion. Does this sound reasonable?”

2. The group can agree on participation guidelines at the start of the meeting, for example: Having a first round of comments, and then, if time permits, members get to speak a second time. In a larger or more formal meeting, it may be necessary to establish time limits on comments, e.g.: Up to 3 minutes per person each time. "To make sure everyone has equal opportunities to participate, it is OK to limit comments to 3 minutes each, and to go one round, and if time permits – a second round? Thank you.”

3. If a small group of individuals dominates the discussion, the Chair can thank them and shift the discussion to other people. For example: “Thank you Rob and Lisa, we haven’t heard from you. Where do you think we should be going with this dilemma?”

Remedial interventions

A remedial intervention is something you do or say while the meeting is in progress to address a problem. Here are a few remedial interventions to deal with imbalances in your meetings:

1. At the start of the meeting, the Chair can acknowledge the significance of the issues and the importance of hearing as many different views as possible. The issues we’re dealing with today are complex and difficult. To make good decisions, we need to hear as many different views as possible. In the past, I noticed that some of you tend to speak up more often than others. At this meeting, I would asked everyone to make room for those who normally speak less, so we can have balanced discussion. Does this sound reasonable?”

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3. If a small group of individuals dominates the discussion, the Chair can thank them and shift the discussion to other people. For example: “Thank you Rob and Lisa, we haven’t heard from you. Where do you think we should be going with this dilemma?”

MOLSON LOCAL HEROES: Funding for sports facility improvements

Molson Local Heroes can help your community maintain, refurbish or upgrade existing sports and recreational facilities. This program offers awards of $50 to $5,000 to help communities with such projects as improving ice rinks, building hiking trails, lighting baseball diamonds, even putting basketball nets in empty parking lots! It is based on a partnership approach, in which communities are asked to provide a volunteer labour force and gather in-kind donations of materials and supplies while Molson offers additional funds to complete projects.

Funding criteria includes that funding goes to individuals (Local Heroes) who coordinate the community effort, not to organizations or teams and that funding is used to purchase supplies/materials. The project should benefit existing adult recreational facilities that provide for informal recreational activities that are free and accessible to everyone in the community. Projects should be completed over a weekend, in a maximum of 5 days. The DEADLINE FOR PROJECT APPLICATIONS IS FRIDAY, MAY 3.


Eli Mina Ad
Municipal Finance Authority of BC

Ask those burning investment questions!

We are planning a series of seminars around the province that will focus on the recovery in the economy, the upcoming increase in interest rates, and investment policies of MFA’s pooled investment program but will also offer participants a chance to ask questions that relate to their own personal investments. We plan to have the seminars in the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island, Prince George, Peace River, the Okanagan and the Kootenays. Both staff and elected officials are invited – no cost.

The seminars will explain the direction and strategies that Phillips, Hager & North (MFA’s investment fund managers) are taking with the MFA funds. They will also have someone available that has expertise in personal investments topics like RRSP’s and mutual funds.

We will also be having two additional topics at the seminars:

1. KPMG will present a checklist of what to review when presented with a Public Private Partnership proposal. This will be of interest to Administrators, Treasurers and Elected Officials who are facing the complex issue of evaluating PPP opportunities.

2. A representative from the Local Government Management Association’s TeamWorks program will update you on how your community can help with or get help from this new initiative. Check out www.lgma-teamworks.ca for more information on this program.

The first session is planned for May 14th in the Versatile A Room at the Sutton Place Hotel, 845 Burrard Street. Please log onto MFA’s website (www.mfa.bc.ca) to sign up for this free information session. We will be sending out information on the dates of the other sessions shortly.

Community Workshops

Community Workshops went into high gear as the MFA team of Steve Bena and Jim Craven have made arrangements to visit over 40 communities in the province between now and the end of October. This latest offering from the Authority presents the opportunity to provide a detailed look from stem to stem on what we can do to help any community in BC. Every workshop will be slightly different, tailor-made to respond to the specific needs of each separate jurisdiction. Consequently we will be calling you two weeks before we arrive to ensure we hit the mark.

Common ingredients will include a look at what your present debt and sinking funds look like with a view to taking advantage of any early payouts of sinking fund surpluses, blending and extending debt if required, and investment strategies. There may be a role for us to play if your problems include one of the Canadian chartered banks as the MFA certainly represents a large amount of business for them under one roof. Sometimes we can help you with your pleas!

We will also be networking with transition staff from the Province and the Federal government (i.e. Western Diversification). Opportunities under the LGMA TeamWorks Program, enabling you to get assistance from medium to large municipalities, will also be explained. If you happen to need professional help in short bursts to get projects off the ground TeamWorks may be able to help.

Let us know how we can help – call Jim @ 250-744-9458 – he will coordinate the sessions and Steve Bena will be coming along on a number of these sessions as well.

Revised Smoking Regulations

Continued from page T3

The WCB’s Prevention Division will be responsible for implementation of the revised WCB regulations in hospitality establishments and will consider the changes before issuing specific guidelines for compliance. Consultation with various organizations is being undertaken.

Hospitality facilities that are licensed to serve liquor and which want to establish designated smoking rooms must also comply with recently revised regulations under the Liquor Control and Licensing Act. New LCLB policy Directive 02-02 deals with a licensee’s requirements under the LCLB policy Directive 02-02 deals with a licensee’s web site at on LCLB requirements is available on the Branch’s web site at www.bccps.gov.bc.ca/lclb or by calling (250) 387-1254 or e-mailing lclb.lclb@gov.bc.ca.

A common software platform

The idea of developing a common software platform, useable by all small- to medium-size local governments is grand in scope, but hugely economical in nature. It is an idea that is being increasingly raised as the MFA’s Community Workshop Program travels the province, looking for ways for BC communities to help other BC communities.

This issue has also been encountered by MFA partner organizations, such as CiviciNet BC and the Local Government Management Association (TeamWorks Program).

Developing a common software platform would allow for one central source to oversee amendments and updates to software. Money and time could be saved by using this central source, with each member always having access to the most current version.

According to the staff at CiviciNet BC, a common software platform would also go a long way toward making the provision of e-government services within reach of small- and medium-sized local governments.

Potentially, the costs of maintaining the software, spread across many local governments, would be much less than if each municipality paid for their own. Can it be done? Yes, if communities band together to do it. It may be worth considering in these challenging economic times. Let us know what you think!

Dividends for all optional MFA program users

Since 1992 we have given a dividend to the users of our Pooled Investment Program. It started out as $100,000 in the initial year and grew to $250,000 for the last 6 years. In 2001 this increased to a record high of $350,000. In 2002 we are introducing a $25,000 dividend for each of the leasing and interim financing programs.

It is because of local government’s continued use of these programs that we are able to offer these dividends. Like the Pooled Investment Program these new dividends will be based on the prior year. We anticipate them being distributed in March of each year.

Police Costs Debate: ‘Ability to Pay & Equity and Fairness’

Continued from page T1

The second major issue raised was regarding the ‘fairness and equity’ of the current police cost formula under which local governments, both large and small, are required to pay for policing.

The following comments illustrate the problem of attempting to expand a formula which is seen to be ‘unfair’ by a number of local governments:

Ashcroft

“In Ashcroft our population is 1968 persons, but the De-

Additional costs under the BCMP lead here covers a very large geographical area including a very busy section of Highway 1. It would be unfair to expect this community to cover these costs. It would also be unfair to allocate costs by reducing the population threshold.”

Warfield

“The municipality takes full responsibility, politically and financially, not only for the enforcement of municipal bylaws but also for bylaw prosecutions. Our community’s volunteer contribution is not acknowledged in the presentation of police costs.”

Logan Lake

“Police provide many services to the residents of our communities and our Province. As you know, police spend considerable time enforcing Federal, Provincial and Municipal laws. We would not mind so much paying our fair share for the enforcement of our local laws. We believe that the Province should pay for the enforcement of provincial laws, and that the Federal government should pay for the enforcement of Federal laws.”

The vast majority of time spent by our local police force is spent in enforcing areas of Provincial and Federal laws. Areas of municipal law (where property taxes might apply) make up much less of their enforcement workload.

For a detailed summary of the comments received by UBCM on policing costs see www.civicnet.gov.bc.ca under Local Government Views on Police Costs.
Drinking Water Protection

Continued from page 12

...ing its review, the Panel invited and reviewed a total of 153 written submissions and 117 completed surveys. The Panel concluded in general that British Columbians were using too much water and paying too little to protect it.

The Panel made six key recommendations:

1. Introduction of an amended DWPA in the Spring 2002 legislative session

Retain the DWPA as a stand-alone Act and amend the Act by incorporating the recommendations of the Drinking Water Review Panel and introduce the amended Act in the 2002 spring session of the BC Legislative Assembly.

2. Creation of a single Drinking Water Protection Agency reporting directly to the Minister of Health Planning

- Create a single lead Drinking Water Protection Agency reporting to the Minister of Health Planning, to integrate the skills, resources and authority of all provincial ministries with responsibility for drinking water protection.
- Appoint a Chief Executive Officer to lead the Drinking Water Protection Agency.

3. Strengthening of drinking water source protection measures

Create a "Purposes" section in the Act and include as purposes:
- to protect water from source to tap,
- to protect humans against water-borne disease and long term adverse health effects, and
- to give drinking water priority over other resource uses in critical or high-risk watersheds (these areas would be defined through the source assessment process).

4. Province-wide screening of risk assessments of water systems to identify and prioritise critical drinking water supply areas

- Assign Drinking Water Officers responsibility for coordination, review and approval of the assessments.
- Require province-wide screening level risk assessments to identify drinking water supply areas that are at high risk of contamination or are already in critical condition. Full source assessments should be conducted in these areas on a priority basis.

5. Creation of a dedicated drinking water protection surcharge applying to a range of user fees

Consistent with the principle of full-cost accounting and cost recovery enabled through legislation, provide the ability to create a drinking water protection surcharge that is dedicated exclusively for use in drinking water protection (including funding to support Drinking Water Officers in each health region and the Multi-Disciplinary Implementation Teams).

6. Development of a comprehensive infrastructure funding program

- Implement a risk management program to set priorities and focus expenditure of resources.

- Encourage and provide incentives for purveyors to charge rates that reflect the true cost of the water supply system and also build up 10-year capital reserve funds for ongoing maintenance and future upgrades (e.g. through dedicated surcharges).

- In addition to these six key priority recommendations, there are 20 other recommendations dealing with the role of Drinking Water Officers, support for small systems, tap water standards, water-use conservation measures, drinking water quality protection for First Nations, improvements to groundwater measures, and other issues.

- The final report and all of the recommendations are available on the following web site: http://wlappwww.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/dw/index.html

- Cabinet is currently reviewing the recommendations of the Drinking Water Review Panel, with a clear indication whether it supports the changes proposed by the panel or not. The provincial government has indicated that the protection of drinking water is a major concern of the present government and that it intends to introduce amendments to the Drinking Water Protection Act during this session of the legislature.

TNAC TO CONTINUE: "BLUE-SKY" REPORT TO BE RELEASED

The Treaty Negotiations Advisory Committee (TNAC) met on March 21, 2002 in Vancouver, the last time before provincial funding is cut. TNAC members learned about progress on restructuring the treaty process and plans for future consultation with third parties and others.

TNAC is a committee established in the early 1990s to identify provincial-wide interests of third parties with respect to treaty negotiations, and to provide advice to the provincial and federal minister responsible for treaties. Committee members have represented a wide range of interests including those of business, labour, environmental, recreational, fish and wildlife groups, and local governments. UBCM has been a member of TNAC since its inception.

At the meeting, both, Stephen Owen, MP, Secretary of State-Junior Minister of Indian Affairs, and John Watson, Regional Director General, Department of Indian Affairs BC Region, expressed appreciation for the contribution of TNAC members and emphasized the beneficial products of the process. Minister Owen announced that the federal government’s commitment to keeping TNAC and third party input “alive” during this transition period was based on the recent meetings between provincial, federal and local governments to discuss the direction of the treaty process.

2. Exemptions Respecting Provision of Site Profiles

- Local Government Zoning or Rezoning its Own Land

- exemptions from providing a site profile if it zones or rezones land that it owns within the area being zoned or rezoned. This exemption applies only if the municipality at the time it undertakes to zone or rezone the lands commits in writing to an Environmental Management manager that it will submit a site profile at the time of development of the land begins. Of course, if another site profile exemption applies, a site profile will not have to be submitted at the time development begins.

- Demolition

In addition, a site profile is no longer required to be submitted at the time buildings are demolished if the demolition does not involve the disturbance or excavation of soil other than that incidental to the demolition.

The complete text of the Contaminated Sites Regulation amendment can be found on the following web site: http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/epd/epdp_contain_sites/whats_new/index.html

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LIQUOR POLICY: NEW DIRECTIONS

The Honourable Rich Coleman, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General announced new policies related to the serving of liquor at an Open Cabinet meeting on March 15, 2002 and the provincial government also made several changes related to the selling of liquor. The regulations introduced that these new measures are expected to go back to Cabinet this spring and licenses will be required to operate under the existing rules until new regulations and policies are in place.

Changes to Liquor Service

The Minister in announcing the changes to the province’s liquor policy, indicated that they were needed to shift the focus in public safety issues:

- Serving Minors
- Intoxication – over serving of liquor;
- Overcrowding,
- Illegal liquor sales.

The Minister announced right policy changes related to the serving of liquor, which outline below:

1. New Licensing Processes – The number of regulatory classes will be reduced from 19 to 2 liquor processes, one for food-primary and one for liquor-primary. Liquor-primary licenses require input from local governments as to the desirability of another liquor-primary facility and the specific size, hours of operation, etc.

2. No Set Maximum Patron Capacities – The regulations will no longer set a fixed maximum patron capacity for a liquor establishment (i.e. 65 seats for a neighbourhood pub and 125 seats for a hotel pub). The physical size of the building will be equal to the space required by the Building Code for the appropriate liquor capacity.

3. Broader Grouping of Businesses – Expansion in the type of businesses that will be allowed to serve liquor any related to the hospitality, entertainment, food or beverage industry, except those with a youth focus and convenience venues like takeout, fast food, food courts, etc.

4. Ability to Relocate the Licensee – Licensees will be able to apply to move to a new location. This policy will allow owners to apply to relocate their operations. The approval of relocation applications will be subject to a number of considerations, including local government input and the views of residents at the new location.

5. Policies for Transition of Licenses – Existing establishments will be reclassified into liquor-primary or food-primary. Any changes to the conditions of these licences, such as extended hours or increased patron capacity will be subject to local government input, a public interest assessment and approval by our licensing branch. Those licences that currently can only serve beer and wine will be able to serve liquor.

6. Extended Operating Hours – The new provincial regulations will extend liquor service to 4 a.m. and removing the maximum of 14 hours of service between 9 a.m. and 4 a.m. will be granted only to a case-by-case basis and only if supported by local government and police.

7. Dual Restaurant/Liquor Licencing – The new regulation will allow an establishment to operate as a restaurant during the day and a bar in the evening. Not every restaurant will be eligible for a liquor-primary licence. Applications will be processed in the same way as any application for a new liquor-primary licence and will require local government, police and residents’ input in consideration of a number of factors, including the number of bars or liquor establishments in any given area.

8. Clubs Retain Privileges and Restrictions (No Changes) – Private clubs such as legions and some golf courses have special privileges coupled with restrictions. Their access is limited to members and their guests, and in some cases members can store private liquor stock on site.

Local Government Role

The provincial government has suggested that local government will be able, if it chooses, to play a larger role in the implementation of liquor policy. The following options were identified:

- Stronger role for local government – local governments will have more input into liquor licensing decisions and will be able to charge fees to recover cost.
- Local Government can opt out.

The province has indicated that the Liquor Control and Licensing Branch will work with the UBCM to develop processes for local government input into liquor licensing under the new regulations.

Detailed information packages will be forwarded to local government by the Liquor Control and Licensing Branch once the regulations have been approved. Information will also be posted on the branch web site www.pssq.gov.bc.ca/ lcb/ref/index.htm.

Rural Agency Stores

The Provincial Cabinet changed the current policy that required approval by the Minister of store locations and a minimum distance of 20 km between stores, and adopted a new policy outlined as follows:

- Two categories for the location criteria for rural agency stores – namely, rural communities over 300 population and tourism destination resorts and that there be no distance criteria.
- Approval for rural agency stores be made by the General Manager at the Liquor Distribution Branch.

The policy changes are intended to allow for the expansion of rural agency stores in the province and will be in place by May 1, 2002.

2002 Net•work•book

The 2002 Directory is coming soon. This Directory is comprehensive workbook for those working in the local government or who want to know who’s in B.C. local government. • municipal and regional district listings of elected officials and senior staff • provincial government departments and B.C. MPs • selected provincial agencies and commissions • other organizations that have ties to local government • consulting services in the professionals directory section

Yes! I want to order the updated 2002 Net•work•book (prepayment required)

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Attention: UBCM

Return to: Union of B.C. Municipalities, Suite 60 - 10551 Shellbridge Way, Richmond, BC V6X 2W9
Tel: 604.270.8226 Fax: 604.270.9116 E-mail: ubcm@ucvi.net.gov.bc.ca

"Blue Sky" Report

Continued from page 19 and consultation process.

1. Maintaining an internet site for TNAC members designed to facilitate communication and information sharing among governments and members for at least the next 12 months.

3. Agreeing with the province and BCTC to invite members of TNAC and RAGs to the BCTC regional viewing sessions (current sessions are being held in the Lower Mainland, North Vancouver Island and Cariboo).

The representative from the provincial Treaty Negotiation Office, Jose Villa Arce, explained that while the province also valued the contribution of TNAC members, in the future the province would need the help of members in a different way. TNAC members also heard details about the content of a soon to be released "Blue Sky" report on coming changes to the treaty process. This report contains recommendations from the tripartite Senior Officials Working Group which includes members from the First Nations Summit, Provincial Treaty Negotiation Office and Federal Treaty Negotiation Office (the Principals) and is chaired by the BC Treaty Commission. Accompanying the report will be a workbook showing areas for immediate focus. From what TNAC members were told, the report expresses the three Principals general support for "incremental" treaty making as opposed to what is being called the "big-bang" approach which was proved to be overwhelming in scale and unproductive. The three Principals agree that an incremental approach needs to include:

- clear linkages of components to final treaty
- indication of rights and interests of third parties and other interests
- agreement on what governance structures would be needed to support a particular incremental approach.

They have also committed to conducting tripartite assessments of each treatable to determine where progress may be most and least likely. This will assist with deciding which tables may benefit from a "time out" from negotiations and which show maximum potential for results. The report from the Senior Officials Working Group will also include plans forProvince-wide discussions on specific issues and the items that will make it the list. Other topics for discussion that will be reported include:

- reconstituted role for BCTC, e.g. include facilitation
- potential for aggregation of First Nation negotiating groups and issues
- process through which offers are made
- financial approach
- First Nation internal consultation and ratification processes

UBCM will make this report available to members on request.