



Association of
Municipal
Administrators



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AMANS REGIONAL REPORT

December 2009

Since the Annual Fall Convention there has been quite a bit of activity at the AMA. In the first week of November President Osborne spoke at the UNSM Banquet. On November 13th an AMA Board meeting was held and then on November 26th President Osborne spoke at SNSMR's New Employee Orientation. There have also been a number of committee meetings:

- Records Meeting
- Education Committee
- Communications Committee
- Municipal Website Venture Board
- AMA Executive Committee
- Women in Local Government Bursary Selection Committee
- Meeting with President, Education Committee Chair and Dalhousie School of Continuing Education.

The AMA regions have been meeting more regularly. There are five regional meetings scheduled for December alone

In addition the AMA has partnered with the UNSM to put on the H1N1 sessions across the province.

AMA Strategic Plan

In 2006 the AMA Board held a 1 ½ day session to develop a Strategic Plan. At the beginning of each year since then the Board had reviewed its goals and scoped out its work plan for the coming year. When developed, it was decided that the Strategic Plan would be a three year plan with a commitment to develop a new plan at the end of the three year period. A Strategic Planning Session is planned for the AMA Board of Directors in January.

Committees

At the November 13th meeting there were a number of Committee appointments made:

- **AMA Membership Committee**
 - Brian Keizer
 - Stephen Feist
 - Ken Moses
- **AMA Education Committee**
 - Kim Paterson, Chair (Municipality of Colchester)
 - Emily Frenette, Municipality of Cumberland
 - Jack Novack, Dalhousie University
 - Jennifer Boyd, Town of Wolfville
 - Penny Smith, Municipality of the District of Shelburne
 - Pam Caswill, HRM
 - Stephen Feist, SNSMR
 - Rick Fraser, CBRM
- **M/P JAG Committee – Joint Advisory Group on Water & Wastewater**
 - Kelly Rice, Village of Lawrencetown
 - Gordon Wilson, District of Digby
 - Richard MacLellan, HRM
- **Model By-Law and Policy Committee**
 - Bea Renton
 - Alex Dumaresq
 - Dan McDougall
- **2010 Fall Convention Committee**
 - Tom Ossinger (co-chair) Town of Digby
 - Linda Fraser (co-chair) District of Digby
 - Patsy Scoville, District of Argyle
 - Trudy LeBlanc, District of Yarmouth
 - Gordon Wilson, District of Digby
 - Becky Doucet, District of Digby
 - Penny Smith, District of Shelburne
 - Paul Wills, SNSMR
 - Shannon Bennett, SNSMR
 - Ken Moses, District of Yarmouth

- **Emergency Management Operations Committee**
 - Bea Renton, (Chair) Town of Lunenburg
 - April Whynot- Lohnes, District of Lunenburg
 - Becky Doucet, District of Digby
 - Carolyn Young, Municipality of Annapolis
 - Bob Christianson, Town of Bible Hill
 - Jim Langille, Town of Truro
 - Brian Smith, Municipality of Kings
- **AMA Reps to serve on PVSC Board**
 - Roy Brideau, Town of Wolfville
 - Cathie O'Toole, HRM
 - Sandy Hudson, Municipality of Victoria
- **Municipal Indicators Program Review**
 - Rennie Bugley, Municipality of Cumberland
 - Greg Herrett, Town of Amherst
- **MFC Audit Committee**
 - Cathie Osborne, HRM

Survey Software

Currently the Province makes its survey software available to municipal units. There are, however, some issues regarding the province's firewall in offering this to municipal units which has made the process of accessing it cumbersome. The AMA with the financial assistance of SNSMR is in the process of purchasing a survey software tool which it will host on its Municipal Website server and make it available to municipal units.

Salary Survey Rebuild

The Salary Survey is currently built using an Access Database. The survey has outgrown Access and therefore has been experiencing frequent crashes. The survey will be therefore rebuilt using the new survey software tool. It is expected that this new survey will be rolled out by the end of December.

Video Conferencing

The concept of video conferencing was a project identified by last year's BoD. Last year the Municipal Website Venture used the province's Polycom video conferencing system to hold one meeting and while there are some limitations with the system it did work well. There is, however, an opportunity to expand this project and make video conferencing available to municipalities as well as use it for AMA and UNSM meetings. SNSMR has agreed to fund a small study to determine what would be the best solution for video conferencing for municipalities and the AMA & UNSM.

Subsequently an application could be made to Eco-Trust for some funding for hardware/software, etc.

Capital Projects Best Practice Manual

The AMA is exploring the possibility of undertaking a project which would see the development of a best practice guide that would serve as a step-by-step roadmap for developing and managing capital construction projects. The suggested guide would be designed to assist municipal administrations in dealing with these projects from "concept to completion" and would include model RFP documents.

Municipal Indicators

The Municipal Indicators Recommendation Implementation Committee will be meeting in the new year. This committee will be made up of AMA members, a UNSM Representative and SNSMR staff and will review and implement the recommendations coming out of the 2006 review and a recent program review by a Dalhousie MPA student.

MPA Summer Intern

As part of the MOU signed by SNSMR, UNSM and Dalhousie's School of Public Administration the AMA once again hired a summer intern. Over the summer Vanessa Robicheau re-researched and wrote reports on:

Administrative and Power Dynamic between Municipal Councils and Chief Administrative Officers: Review and Analysis and Public Administrative Capacity. Vanessa presented final reports to the Board and they can be found on the AMA Website

Workshops and Conferences

The AMA will be jointly holding a CAO/CEO Forum this Spring with the UNSM along with a workshop on Council/Staff Relations which will be held in conjunction with the UNSM's Spring Workshop.

AMA Spring Conference: This year's event will be hosted by the Pictou Region and will be held at the Pictou Lodge in June 10 & 11.

AMA Fall Convention will be held at Digby Pines October 5-8th

Joint AMA/UNSM Convention: The AMA and UNSM are striking a committee to explore the possibility of holding a joint Fall Convention in 2013.

New Members:

The AMA has two new members:

- Gloria Banks, CA, Grant Thornton (affiliate member)
- Erin Beaudin, CAO, District of Chester (full member)
- Marsha Amiro, Accounts Payable Clerk, District of Argyle
- Catherine Ward, Purchasing and inventory Clerk, Solid Waste Coordinator, Town of Springhill

Municipal Finance Officers Meeting-

On the Tuesday before the convention the Municipal Finance Officers met. Several relevant presentations were made and an opportunity was given for discussion of common issues and concerns. The Municipal Finance Corporation sponsored the event and about 50 people were in attendance.

As a result of that meeting, SNSMR put a one-day session on for Finance Officers.

Water and Waste Water Operator Courses

The AMA has worked with NSCC to offer a course in Water and Wastewater Operating training at the Nova Scotia Community College. A survey that the AMA did suggested that 60% - 70% of the province's water and wastewater operators will be retiring over the next decade. Now Municipal Water and Wastewater operators in two Maritime Provinces will soon have the opportunity to upgrade their skills from home, thanks to a recent partnership between the Nova Scotia Community College and the New Brunswick Community College.

Starting February 1, the NSCC will begin offering online courses via their website for both current and future operators. The NBCC has been offering a similar program for a number of years.

The course curriculum is targeted at three distinct markets. "The idea is to bring operators who already have their Nova Scotia Department of the Environment (NSDE) license the opportunity to obtain the mandatory CEUs required to maintain that license, to provide unlicensed operators with help in writing their NSDE exams, and to give those who are new to the field a chance to explore their career options."

The courses are offered online to give people the flexibility to study wherever and whenever they are able.

