

2017-18 President's Report – October 18, 2018

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Personal Thoughts

Whoa, time does fly when you get voluntold to be president 😊. Already in year one of two, which is the first time that was ever said in an AMA presidential report. The move from one a year to two-year term, while increasing the commitment of the executive, is a necessary move to ensure relationships between the Province, NSFM and AMA are fostered and made stronger. At the end of the day, you cannot separate relationships with results. The AMA is blessed with a strong group of board members, and a dedicated staff that are ready to do what it takes to make their vision come true – that we truly are the place to work to make a difference to our communities.

Municipal modernization, amalgamation, restructuring. Whatever you want to call it, the work surrounding this is critical to maintaining sustainable communities and municipalities. It sounds mysterious and new. It's not. Many municipalities across the Country are embracing new ways to deliver municipal services – whether it is through shared tax revenues, regional planning, shared services, regional governance or amalgamation. Many municipalities are engaged in municipal change right now. The AMA actively collects information on what is happening in our regions and in our country to inform its members.

Change is hard. It requires us to rebuild the plane while we are flying it. It requires thinking that is not limited to our boundaries but keeps our citizens from feeling that their municipality abandoned their cultural or community needs. It takes a Provincial Government open to either leading that form of change or allowing municipalities more space to modernize themselves. The Windsor-West Hants amalgamation legislation is a positive step for all of us to learn how this happens in 2018. AMANS, NSFM and the Province have engaged in a consultative process led by a firm named The Outside and led by Tim Merry and Tuesday Ryan-Hart.

Finally, I have a personal commitment. I am committed, either as President or Past President, to lead a special project. One that supports municipalities to make effective financial decisions using predictive software using local software developers. The Financial Information Return and Financial Indicators paint a picture of the past. The past does not consider demographic and service changes coming to our municipalities. Our Municipality will lead a pilot project that will develop predictive software that will be easy to use and understand, with the goal of informing CAO's, Directors and Council on what is headed our way. This information could support the needed work around municipal modernization.

AMA Achievements

I would refer to the chart at the end of this report developed by staff to indicate the work done and ongoing. Much of the work AMA does involves multiyear commitments, and administrators volunteering their time and energy to support the work of AMA staff.

Why is AMANS more relevant than ever?

The tide is changing – municipalities are being asked to lead more and more projects. The expertise at the municipal administrative level is as strong as its ever been. We are training CAO's and staff that need to be nimble, smart, hardworking and are dealing with more complexity than ever before. The NSFAM and the Province must rely on our work and our experience in almost every major municipal issue, from climate change to rural internet, our experience is massive. We have many talented people at the municipal level of government. This talent isn't without some responsibility not only for administrators to look at their own community, but at the Province as a whole in our goal to make this a great place to live and work, no matter the community. If you are reading this, please recruit another AMA member. We need the best talent to make the biggest difference. The monetary pay is cruddy, the value you shall bring to your Province is immeasurable. No matter how small your unit, your effort, your ideas and your passion make a difference.

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CAO – Municipality of the District of Argyle
President - AMANS

Project	In Collaboration with	Status
Model Expense and Hospitality Policy	AMA/DMA	Completed this year
Municipal Modernization	AMA/DMA/NSFM	Ongoing
MGA Review Code of Conduct (part of MGA Review)	AMA/DMA/NSFM	Mandatory Planning Legislation passed Research completed, and recommendations presented to MGA Review Committee, MGA Steering Committee, AMA Board and NSFAM Board.
AMA Governance	AMA	Term of President changed to a two year term to allow more momentum and consistence on longer-term projects Further review of by-laws and other governance documents ongoing
Leadership Module	AMA	New Leadership module "Leading in the Grey" developed and run. Session was sold out so a second one is being run.
Human Resource Module	AMA Education Committee	Have engaged Noella Martin, Wickwire Holm to develop a module which will look at the legal aspects of employment from the employer perspective. Being launched mid-November
Financial Modules Short Snappers	AMA Education Committee	Have taken key components from the previously developed Financial modules to form shorter sessions called "Short Snappers". The sessions are three-hours in length.

Capped Assessment	AMA/NSFM/DMA	AMA working with NSFM to pull all the previous research together and determine what are the best options for phasing out the CAP.
Accessibility Framework	AMA/DMA/NSFM/DOJ	AMA has representation on the Provincial/Municipal Accessibility Working group to develop tools to help municipalities to develop their accessibility framework
Cannabis Working Group	AMA/NSFM/DOJ plus rep on Provincial Committee	The Municipal Working Group on Cannabis has built on the work of FCM and has prepared a list of municipal functions that could be impacted Working on Cannabis in the Workplace training. NSFM has been lobbying the government for a revenue sharing model for municipalities.
Substance Use Resources	AMA	AMA launched on-line-training in partnership with Sayle Group for employers, managers and employees of all levels to help inform employees about the dangers of impairment in the workplace. AMA continues to work on a model substance use policy for municipalities
Procurement Resources	AMA/NS Procurement	Working with NS Procurement to disseminate information to municipalities with respect to procurement regulations, resources and best practices. Have developed a library of all procurement policies in the province and Internal Services at the Province is developing a high-level webinar on procurement for municipalities.
Fire Services Report	AMA/DMA/NSFM/Fire Services Association	Joint Municipal Fire Services Committee has developed a work/action plan to move forward with the recommendations from other reports including the POMAX report.
Wellness – Working Minds Mental Health Training	AMA/NS Health Authority	
AMA Audit Committee	AMA	The AMA has struck an audit committee with the Secretary Treasurer as chair, one additional Board member and a member at large serving on the Committee.
Joint Provincial Roads Committee	AMA/DMA/NSFM/TIR	AMA has appointed two members to this committee which will start meeting this Fall
Joint Provincial Housing Committee	AMA/NSFM/DMA/NS Housing	AMA has appointed two members to this committee which will start meeting this Fall.
2018 Salary Survey	AMA and participating municipalities	Completed and distributed this Fall