

MEETING WITH CABINET

On November 29, 2007 before taking the stage for the Ministerial Forum, members of the Provincial Cabinet met with the AMM Board to discuss a variety of municipal issues. The discussion focused on the AMM's top two issues for 2007: fiscal balance and water.

The AMM highlighted that the time has come for a change in intergovernmental relationships in Canada. Municipal governments in Manitoba enjoy a strong working relationship with the Provincial Government, however more innovative approaches to funding are required. Without a review of the current roles of each order of government and the resources available to fulfill these responsibilities, municipalities will continue to face significant financial constraints. There is a growing recognition by Provincial Governments across Canada of the importance of investing in communities and Manitoba should move forward in examining the roles, responsibilities and resources of municipal government in this province.

With the increasing importance of environmental concerns including water protection, municipal governments have become a key partner in water protection initiatives. However the new legislation governing water protection leaves municipalities with substantial additional costs. The AMM indicated that municipalities will continue to work with the Province to advance water protection initiatives, but the issue of financing must be addressed. The Province should not expect communities to proceed through the difficult and lengthy process associated with Integrated Watershed Management Plans if the necessary funding for implementation is not available. Therefore, the AMM urged the Prov-

ince to provide adequate resources for water initiatives. President Bell thanked the Premier and Cabinet for establishing the Water Control Works and Drainage Licensing Branch in order to ease drainage problems, and for implementing the Community Hosting Fund. Other issues raised during the meeting included:

- Treaty Land Entitlements (TLE) and Municipalities
- Legal Costs of Negotiating TLE Agreements
- Recycling
- Cleanup of Contaminated Sites
- Funding for Libraries
- Recreation Centre Funding
- Education Tax
- Disaster Financial Assistance
- Permanent Flood Protection
- Affordable Housing in Rural Manitoba
- Health Professional Recruitment, Retention and Training
- Community Capital Contributions to Health Projects
- Increased Infrastructure Funding
- Highways Capital Budget
- Reinstate the Manitoba Airports Capital Assistance Program (MACAP) and the Bridge Co-operative Program
- Rail Line Abandonment
- Land Use Planning
- Policing Costs for Municipalities
- The Youth Criminal Justice Act
- Funding for Renewable Energy
- Tripartite Water Funding Program
- Drainage



L to R: Minister Steve Ashton, Minister Eric Robinson, President Ron Bell, Premier Gary Doer, Minister Rosann Wowchuk, Minister Stan Struthers and Minister Christine Melnick immediately prior to the 2007 Ministerial Forum.