

AMM Resolution Process

by Tyler MacAfee – AMM Director of Policy and Communications

The AMM is an organization driven by its membership, and it is the issues that are raised by the membership that dictate its lobbying direction. While issues are raised at regular regional meetings and municipal visit, it's the resolutions voted on at the Annual AMM Convention that set the main lobbying course of the AMM.

However, there are many stages a resolu-

tion must pass through before it ever reaches the floor of the AMM Convention.

What if I have an issue that I want the AMM to deal with?

The most important thing to do when there is an issue that affects you and your neighbouring municipalities is to let the AMM know. When a number of municipalities are raising

similar issues, it lets the AMM know that there is a concern. If an issue arises that your municipality feels the AMM can assist with, your municipality should submit a resolution so the membership can provide direction to the AMM on the issue through the resolution process.

What should a resolution include?

A good resolution is a clear resolution that deals with a single specific issue that affects municipal government. It is important that a resolution clearly indicates what the issue is and why it is important. This is the purpose of the preamble, or motivation clauses of the resolution (the 'Whereas' clauses), that come before the operative clause ('Be it resolved' clause). Included here is why this is an issue, how it impacts municipalities and anything else that would help explain the resolution to the reader and potential supporter.

This is followed by the operative clause that is the outcome the municipality would like to see. This is the most important part of the resolution, as this is what the AMM will be lobbying for. The clearer the resolution, the easier it is to gain support for the resolution and the easier it is for the AMM to make the case to government.

What happens after I send a resolution to the AMM?

After resolutions are sent to the AMM, they are grouped together according to the resolution sponsor's AMM district. Often municipalities copy the AMM on resolutions they are sending to other levels of government, so it is important that if your municipality is sending a resolution to the AMM for consideration for June District meetings or the Convention, this is made clear in the cover letter.

June meetings

For resolutions that are raised before June, they are brought forward for debate at the sponsor's June District meeting. At the start of these meetings the delegates in attendance elect a resolution committee for the day, the chairman of which sits on the AMM Convention Resolution Committee. The district committee meets and classifies the resolutions according to four categories:

A – Anything that has a direct impact on municipal finances and authority – an example would include changes to the *Municipal Act* or funding for municipalities.

B – Anything that has an indirect impact on



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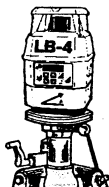
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municipalities – an example would include a resolution dealing with the recycling of tires.

C – Anything that deals with an issue exclusive to a region – an example would include the practices at a specific border crossing.

D – A non-municipal issue – an example would include gun control.

The delegates at the June meetings debate all the 'A,' 'B,' and 'C' resolutions, however only the 'A' and 'B' resolutions that are approved are brought forward to the convention. These resolutions are classified as having passed through the June District meeting in the Convention Handbook by adding the district in parentheses after the sponsor(s). The AMM Board reviews 'C' resolutions and decides a course of action for the resolution. This can include a reclassification to 'A' or 'B' if it sees fit.

Post-June issues

Not all issues are known by June and often issues arise between June and the November convention. The AMM still accepts resolutions after the June meetings and these are brought forward to the AMM Convention Resolution Committee that consists of the district chairs elected by the regions at the June district meetings and chaired by the two AMM Vice-Presidents. This committee reviews all resolutions and classifies them accordingly. A deadline

for the submission of resolutions for the convention is set, usually in mid-September to allow enough time for printing in the Convention handbook.

Late Resolutions

However, just as not all issues can be known before June, not all issues can be known before September and there is a mechanism in place for late resolutions to be submitted for consideration for debate at the convention. These late resolutions are reviewed by the resolutions committee at their meeting at the first day of the Convention. For a resolution to be considered as late and brought to the floor of the convention for debate, it must be dealing with an emerging issue. The resolution must have been brought forward late because it was not possible to bring the issue forward any sooner. For example, if a government program were suddenly cancelled in October, a late resolution on the issue would be warranted. A late resolution dealing with an ongoing issue such as more funding for education would not be accepted as a late resolution and would be carried over to next year's June meetings.

Once a resolution has worked its way through the process, it is time for debate and the vote. If a resolution is passed by a simple majority it is considered passed and becomes AMM policy.

After the Convention

After the Convention, the AMM forwards all accepted resolutions to the appropriate government departments for their response. This is extremely helpful to the AMM's lobbying efforts as it gives an indication of where government stands on an issue. It also puts the issue on the government's radar. Once all responses are received, the AMM forwards these to its members. The AMM also keeps municipalities informed on lobbying efforts through our communications network, including our news bulletin, magazine, position papers and resolutions updates. A copy of all active resolutions is available by following the links on the AMM website.

The resolutions are what dictate the AMM's lobbying efforts and it is the resolutions passed at the Convention that comprise the agendas for meetings with various Ministers, as well as our pre-budget submission to the Minister of Finance and our meeting with Cabinet. Resolutions passed by our membership are the foundation of the AMM lobbying process and it is important that the process is understood to ensure that issues are heard. Questions about the resolutions process may be directed to AMM Director of Policy and Communication **Tyler MacAfee** (204-856-2362 or tmacafee@amm.mb.ca). Sample resolutions may also be viewed on the AMM website at www.amm.mb.ca. §

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