



Stuart Briese, President

PARM a collective effort

This summer, the AMM found itself busy with issues surrounding the drought situation and BSE. The AMM has dedicated a lot of time, effort and resources to help those municipalities get their concerns heard at the provincial and federal levels. The frustration over these issues has escalated to the point where our members are feeling that extreme measures need to be taken. As the voice for all municipalities, the AMM has been working, and will continue to work, hard to get the message to government that this issue is having a serious economic impact on all municipalities in Manitoba.

Currently, the AMM is working with Alberta and Saskatchewan – as the Prairie Association of Rural Municipalities (PARM) – to bring all our members together for a meeting this fall. We have also had several meetings with the Ministers of Intergovernmental Affairs and Agriculture, as well as a meeting with the Premier. I am very encouraged by the fact that our members who are affected by the drought and/or BSE are working together to find a solution. With a strong voice, we can make the changes that need to happen in order to improve the situation.

This issue was also brought forward at the recent FCM Board meeting in Windsor Ontario in the beginning of September. It, too, is establishing staff time and resources to take this issue to the federal government.

Along with the BSE/drought issue, the FCM Board decided to lobby Ottawa on rebating the total amount of GST collected back to municipal governments. It felt that, as a level of government, they should have a 100% rebate instead of the 57.14% that is currently rebated.

The FCM also updated Board members on its push for more front-loading of the infrastructure program. The federal government committed a billion dollars to a 10-year infrastructure program. With an even larger deficit in infrastructure across the country, the FCM lobbied the government to have the billion dollars go into the first two-to-three years of the program with additional funding to cover the remaining years of the program.

Ottawa agreed to change the program delivery. Now, each province and territory will receive \$15 million as base funding with the rest of the money being decided by the old funding formula. This is a considerable improvement for Manitoba which, under the per capita formula for each province, was receiving just over \$3 million dollars from the program. The AMM will continue to monitor the progress of these issues to keep you informed.

As a last note, I'd like to say that this year has been very busy and productive. Many different issues have emerged, like policing and the BSE/drought crisis, while other issues have been vigorously worked

on, such as the Economic Development Task Force and the Housing Conference. And yet, other issues, like single tier social assistance, have been resolved.

Your Board of Directors has shown nothing less than total dedication to the membership and I'm always pleased to report that the AMM staff has worked tirelessly in making this organization a progressive and effective voice for Manitoba's municipalities.

I look forward to seeing you all at our Convention. ●

AMM Board

Executive President

Coun. Stuart Briese, RM of Langford

Vice-President Rural

Reeve Garry Wasylowski, RM of Armstrong

Vice-President Urban

Mayor Ron Bell, Town of Birtle

Directors

Coun. Steven Lupky, Town of Arborg

Reeve Harold Foster, RM of Bifrost

Mayor Shirley Kalyniuk, Town of Rosburn

Reeve Roger Wilson, RM of Birtle

Mayor Stan Ward, Town of Virden

Councillor Jae Eadie, City of Winnipeg

Councillor Art Rempel, City of Steinbach

Reeve George Harbottle, RM of Alexander

Reeve Karen Caldwell, RM of Pipestone

Coun. Doug Dobrowski, RM of Macdonald

Coun. Rick Martel, Town of Altona

Coun. Bert Lagimodiere, Town of The Pas

Reeve Albert Nabe, RM of Shell River

Mayor Lorne Boguski, Town of Roblin

Wally Melnyk,
President of the Manitoba Municipal
Administrators Association