



Stuart Briese, President

FCM comes to Manitoba

A lot of changes have occurred over the last few months, many as a result of elections. Nationally, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) held its national board elections at its annual conference in Winnipeg at the end of May. At the provincial level, Manitoba had its election on June 3. Locally, the AMM had its Board of Directors elections at this year's June District Meetings.

Regarding the FCM, I would like to congratulate **Yves Ducharme**, Mayor of Gatineau, Quebec, for being elected President. I'd also like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of **John Schmal**, FCM's outgoing President. I'd also like to congratulate the three new elected board members from Manitoba who will be sitting on the FCM Board: **Grant Buchanan**, Councillor in the Town of The Pas, **Neil Schmidt**, Mayor of Winkler, and **Jeff McConnell**, Councillor in the Town of Virden.

Manitoba currently has five seats on the FCM Board. Automatic appointments are given to myself, as President of AMM, and to **Gord Steeves**, as the City of Winnipeg representative. I look forward to working on federal issues with the three newly elected Board members. I would also like to thank **Bill Comaskey**, Mayor of Thompson and **Don Jessiman**, Councillor in Brandon, for their work and valuable input to municipal issues at the national level during their time on the FCM Board.

Regarding the FCM convention that was held in Winnipeg at the end of May, it was an excellent opportunity for Winnipeg to host this year's FCM annual meeting. I was glad to see so many Manitoba officials in attendance and participating in the various sessions. These officials also took advantage of the networking opportunities with colleagues from across Canada.

During the four weeks of campaigning leading up to the June 3 election day in Manitoba, the AMM made a concentrated effort to have municipal issues addressed in the various parties' platforms. The AMM released an election wish list – A

Municipal Vision for the 2003 Provincial Election – outlining our six top issues: education funding through property taxes; Manitoba's crumbling roads and highways; ILOs and land use planning; natural gas expansion; water safety and drainage; and policing issues. The AMM's number one issue – education funding through property taxes – became a main issue during the campaign, and the AMM will continue to maintain the momentum of the education issue by lobbying the government to take the recommendations of the Minister's Working Group and resolve this issue.

Also, with a new cabinet in place, the AMM will now be setting up meetings with the new ministers (especially the new Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs) and updating them on the municipal issues affecting their departments.

We recently completed another successful series of June District Meetings. I would like to thank our members for attending this important event and for contributing to the organization by bringing forward resolutions. I would also like to thank the AMM staff for their hard work and to our host communities for their generous hospitality. With this year's June Districts' elections for the AMM Board come new opportunities. I'm looking forward to working with the Board on promoting the best interests of our communities and our province.

For a quick update on some policy issues:

- At the June District Meetings, Manitoba Telecom Services (MTS) and the AMM have reached an agreement on a municipal access guidelines document. We are very pleased with these guidelines. This is probably the first time in Canada that an agreement has been made between local government and a private company. Packages with all the information will be sent to members very soon.
- I also want to thank our members who attended the Economic Development Task Force consultations in May. Included in the Special Report in this

issue of *The Municipal Leader* is an update on the consultations and the next steps we will be taking with our Task Force. I hope you find the information in the article, as well as the rest of the Special Report, helpful to you and your community.

Have a safe and relaxing summer.

All the best. ●

AMM Board

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