



Dale Lyle, MMAA President

Big wheel keep on turning

I thought that this last AMM Convention was a particularly good one. AMM conventions are always good, but there is something special about the ones that follow directly behind an election. There is brand new energy emanating from newly elected members of council and a renewed energy from those who have been re-elected. Elected officials and staff alike seem to be even more interested than usual in learning, sharing and getting on with the business of good governance.

I can't help comparing municipal government to a big wheel. Right after the election, it is like the big wheel just came out of the shop. Lubricated, tuned up and nicely

balanced by a new electoral mandate, the big wheel is already turning.

Elected officials are like the wheel hub. From the hub comes direction. It is the policy that that elected officials set that determines what direction and how quickly the wheel will turn. A nicely balanced and aligned hub works smoothly and effortlessly. It is a small component in size, but of course without it, the wheel isn't going anywhere.

Staff members are like the spokes. It is their function to reach out from the hub. It is their job to insure policy is transformed into action. Action that is a direct reflection of the policy set by the 'hub,' the council

of elected officials. The spokes must be straight, tight and balanced as well.

I like to think of the many opportunities for professional development, offered by the MMAA, the AMM, Intergovernmental Affairs and a number of interested educational institutions like the University of Manitoba, as the opportunity for municipal government (the wheel) to be serviced, adjusted or tweaked. As always, the MMAA and the AMM are committed to aggressive professional development programs. Each year, there is an excellent selection of seminars, meetings and conferences covering a number of subjects that will benefit staff as well as elected officials.

So does the 'big wheel keep on turning?' Absolutely! But it turns so much better when all the components are well maintained and working efficiently together. We at the Manitoba Municipal Administrators Association look forward to the opportunity of working closely with our newly elected councils over the next four years.

Together we will make a difference when the 'rubber hits the road.' ☺



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