

## AMM Board of Directors

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Ron Bell, President

## Convention sets stage for significant anniversary

Another Convention has come and gone and I have to begin by thanking the entire AMM delegate body for acclaiming me to serve another term as President of the Association. I truly appreciate your goodwill and encouragement and I plan to work as hard, if not harder, on your behalf over the next year as I have over the past three years.

I'd also like to congratulate Urban Vice-President **Shirley Kalyniuk** and Rural Vice-President **Doug Dobrowolski** on being re-elected and acclaimed, respectively. The three of us have served as your Executive team for one year now and I truly appreciate the confidence shown in our leadership. What the experience has shown us, I think, is that we are going in the direction that our membership wants us to. Together, we will continue to move forward on the many issues you raised during Convention.

In fact, we began moving forward even before Convention adjourned, by meeting with Premier Doer and members of the Provincial Cabinet on November 29 just prior to the Ministerial Forum. This is an annual meeting that gives us the opportunity to discuss the most critical issues raised by our membership directly with the Premier. Our number one issue was, not surprisingly, fiscal balance – a leading issue throughout Convention. We used the opportunity to raise a number of other hot-button issues with Cabinet as well. You can view the complete position paper we presented to Premier Doer on the AMM website at [www.amm.mb.ca](http://www.amm.mb.ca).

One issue that has arisen since Convention concerns the Conservation Districts (CD) Program in Manitoba. On December 19, I received a discussion document from Manitoba Water Stewardship, entitled

*Conservation Districts Program: Framework for the Future*. This document is causing a great deal of concern for municipalities. With the *Planning Act* still a fairly recent development, municipalities are now faced with a mandate that could affect local planning to an even greater extent.

A consultation process is in place, and the AMM intends to fully participate in this process. I cannot stress enough how important it is for YOU, our members, to also participate. This is an initiative that could have extremely far-reaching effects on our local planning activities, and everyone involved needs to take action.

“We have become a truly unified organization.”

Of course, we will keep you informed and up-to-date on this issue. In the meantime, you can view the discussion document and download

a feedback form at [www.gov.mb.ca/waterstewardship/agencies/cd/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/waterstewardship/agencies/cd/index.html). Remember, you have an important role to play in this dialogue, and it is imperative that you have a say.

In closing, while it is always exciting to begin a new year, it is especially true of *this* year, as 2008 represents the 10-year anniversary of the AMM. This is such a highlight for all of us, as it not only represents 10 years of growth, it represents what we have become over the past decade – a truly unified organization. The AMM is one of the few municipal associations that represent ALL municipalities – north to south, rural to urban, province-wide. It is that spirit of partnership and cooperation that makes it such an honour for me to serve as your President. ☘