

**AMM Presents on Gas
Tax Accountability Act**

On May 18, the AMM appeared before the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs to present the AMM's views on Bill 14: *The Gas Tax Accountability Act*.

Bill 14 requires the Provincial Government to report on the revenue coming from fuel tax in Manitoba, but also to report on how these revenues are spent. The AMM supports this mechanism of accountability for fuel tax revenue and expenditures, as adequate transportation infrastructure is a priority issue for AMM members.

While the AMM is pleased that the Provincial Government is taking this step to reduce the infrastructure deficit in Manitoba by introducing this Act, a policy to devote gas tax to municipal infrastructure is not enough to address the approximately \$3.4 billion needed for Manitoba's highways system.

The AMM stressed that any new monies coming as part of a new deal for municipalities must be distributed fairly across the province. The AMM also called for a transportation blueprint to ensure efficient spending on the most pressing transportation infrastructure items.

The AMM believes that Bill 14: *The Gas Tax Accountability Act* is a good start and will help to address a portion of the municipal infrastructure backlog.

A copy of the presentation made by the AMM will be available on the AMM website at www.amm.mb.ca/legpresentations.htm

AMM Meets with Federal Agriculture Minister

On May 17, the AMM met with Federal Minister of Agriculture Bob Speller to discuss several issues.

First on the agenda was BSE. The Minister felt it would be weeks rather than months before the border would be open to live cattle. He noted that at a meeting with the Prime Minister and the President of the United States, both leaders indicated they wanted to resolve the issue based on science, not politics.

The Minister explained that the first stage would be to open the Canada/U.S. border to live cattle, followed by getting livestock into other international markets. Minister Speller indicated that overall, the numbers for beef exports are not that different than before the crisis, however it is now all boxed beef. The Minister did acknowledge that the situation in Manitoba is unique due to the lack of slaughter capacity in the Province. He noted that a long-term marketing strategy for cattle is required. He also stated that, at a recent Federal-Provincial conference, he raised the issue of Cross-Provincial inspections to allow trade between provinces for cattle. He will raise the issue again at the end of June.

Another issue discussed with the Minister was the rendering of animal waste for bio-diesel. The Minister is supportive and indicated the Federal government could help. He noted that the disposal of rendered animal waste, however, is a provincial responsibility.

On the issue of ethanol expansion, Minister Speller indicated there is a federal commitment of \$116 million for ethanol expansion and that Manitoba should apply.

Finally, regarding the proposed Alternate Land Use System (ALUS), Minister Speller felt the Federal government would be supportive of this initiative. The difficulty is that environmental issues are a provincial responsibility and a great deal of discussion is required before an initiative such as ALUS can proceed.

The AMM will follow up with the Minister on this meeting and continue to lobby the Federal government on these issues.

**Canada and Manitoba Agree in Principle to Improve
Infrastructure in Rural Areas**

The governments of Canada and Manitoba announced on May 19 the signing of an agreement in principle to improve and renew public infrastructure in small and rural communities across Manitoba. The five-year agreement includes \$41 million each from the federal and provincial governments, as well as \$41 million from the project applicants.

Under the Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Program, funded under the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF), projects will be funded equally by both levels of government and applicants, and jointly administered by the Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Secretariat.

The governments of Canada and Manitoba have agreed that at least 40 percent of the funding available under this program will go to "green" projects that improve the environment and contribute to cleaner air, soil, and water. Other eligible categories will be local roads, and cultural, recreational and tourism infrastructure and connectivity.

As under the Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Program, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities and the Northern Association of Community Councils will play a key role in guiding project selection.

For more information on the Government of Canada and Manitoba's infrastructure programs, visit www.infrastructure.gc.ca or www.infrastructure.mb.ca.

From the AMM Office

Coming Events

June Districts

Agendas for the June District meetings have been circulated to all municipalities. Information is also available on the AMM Web site at www.amm.mb.ca. Watch the web site for up-to-date information.

CENTRAL DISTRICT

Rhineland Pioneer Centre 227 10th Avenue – Altona, MB

Monday, June 14, 2004

WESTERN DISTRICT

Pipestone Community Hall 125 Fourth Street – Pipestone, MB

Tuesday, June 15, 2004

MIDWESTERN DISTRICT

Hamiota Community Centre 50 Fourth Street – Hamiota, MB

Wednesday, June 16, 2004

PARKLANDS DISTRICT

112 Fifth Avenue South – Swan River, MB

Thursday, June 17, 2004

NORTHERN DISTRICT

Thompson City Hall 226 Mystery Lake Road – Thompson, MB

Monday, June 21, 2004

EASTERN DISTRICT

Hadashville Recreation Centre – Highway 11 (1 mile north of Junction Hwy 1 and Hwy 11) – Hadashville, MB

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

INTERLAKE DISTRICT

Winnipeg Beach Royal Canadian Legion 20 Hamilton Avenue – Winnipeg Beach, MB

Thursday, June 24, 2004

Deadline

June 9th is the Deadline for June Districts Resolutions

Please submit resolutions to AMM Director of Policy and Communications Tyler MacAfee at the AMM office prior to June 9th, 2004.

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Portage la Prairie, MB R1N 1P0
Fax: 204-856-2370
Email: tmacafee@amm.mb.ca

C4 Set to Begin

The AMM has been pleased to have been involved in the development of the Climate Change Community Challenge (C4), an initiative designed to help communities find solutions to climate change and to reduce greenhouse gases and save money. Communities are invited to submit expressions of interest to the Province and workshops are planned to help municipalities with the process. The following workshops run from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Monday, May 31, 2004 - Thompson - Provincial Building, Rm. 102

Tuesday, June 1, 2004 - The Pas - Kikiwak Inn, Constant Room

Wednesday, June 2, 2004 - Winnipeg - Convention Centre, Meeting Room 2E

Thursday, June 3, 2004 - Brandon - Keystone Centre, Assembly Hall

For further information or to confirm your attendance at one of the workshops, please contact Andrew Cowan at 204-945-6099.

Notices

Road Restrictions Lifted

Manitoba Transportation and Government Services has advised that the Spring Road Restrictions on affected highways will be lifted as of the following dates:

Zone 1 May 28, 2004 at 12:01 a.m.

Zone 2 June 1, 2004 at 12:01 a.m.

If you have any questions please contact Permit Services at (204)945-3961.

Canada-Manitoba Water Supply Expansion Program (CMWSEP)

The CMWSEP is a four-year program ending on March 31, 2006. Three tiers of financial assistance are available. The Tier One deadline has passed but there is no application deadline for Tier Two – *Multi-user Infrastructure Projects*, or for Tier Three – *Strategic Work Projects*.

For program and application information, please contact 1-800-667-8567, or visit the web site at www.agr.gc.ca/h2o/.

For Sale

Konica 1120 Photocopier RM of Riverside

Tenders will be received up to 4:30 p.m. Monday, June 7th, 2004 for a Konica Photo Copier Model #1120, complete with 2 paper trays, copy sorter and stand. Present Meter Reading is 127,600. Features: enlarges and reduces, handles 11" x 17" copies. For further information, please contact the municipal office, 110 Rea Street, Dunrea, MB @ 204-776-2113. Tenders to be submitted marked "Copier" and sent to:
R.M. of Riverside, Box 160
Dunrea, MB R0K 0S0

Hewlett-Packard 4550 Laserjet Printer AMM Office

2 years old - \$1,500.00
For more information, contact:
Linda Hargest, Director of Administration, AMM
Telephone: 204-856-2361
Email: lhargest@amm.mb.ca

Misc. Equipment RM of Mountain

Sealed tenders will be received by the undersigned until 4:30 p.m. Friday, June 4, 2004 for:
1 Standby Power Plant, Pump and Equipment
1 Pitless Well Unit
1 1989 L.H. Manurigator Model 375-1200
For more information please call:
Norm Bruce, RM of Mountain
Box 155, Birch River, MB R0L 0L0
Telephone: 204-326-4222

Announcements

Welcome

The AMM is pleased to welcome Lynne Bereza as the new Communications Coordinator. Lynne can be contacted at 204-856-2366 or by email at lbereza@amm.mb.ca.