

Budget Day 2004

The AMM was on hand again this year for the tabling of the Provincial Government's budget. BSE compensation, drought and forest fires were cited as some of the reasons for this year's budget numbers. The AMM was disappointed to see reductions in several programs as well as a lack of additional funding in much needed areas.

Program funding reduced in this year's budget include more than a \$1 million reduction to Rural Economic Development Initiatives (REDI) grants, and a scale back of funding for the Community Places Program (CPP), eliminating last year's increase.

The AMM had hoped to see additional funding put in place to provide the necessary complement of staff to meet increased demands for development plan approvals, drainage licenses and any new requirements being anticipated under the proposed Water Protection Act.

The AMM was also disappointed to see the extension of the retail sales tax to legal, accounting, engineering, architectural and security services, as this will certainly increase costs of municipal projects that require these services.

There were some bright spots in this year's budget. These include an additional \$10 million dollars to the Highways Capital Budget, a commitment to complete the twinning of the Trans-Canada Highway one year earlier, and an increase to the libraries budget.

(continued...)

AMM Provincial Minister Meetings Continue

The AMM continued its meetings with Provincial Ministers by meeting with the Minister of Industry, Economic Development and Mines Scott Smith and the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism Eric Robinson in late April. As with all Ministers, the AMM raised a new deal for municipalities and education funding along with specific departmental issues.

Minister Smith

The AMM began the April 19th meeting with Minister Smith by raising the need for the Province to increase its contribution to the mining industry in Manitoba to improve investment and exploration. The AMM encouraged the Province to increase its commitment to the Mineral Exploration Assistance Program and increase funding for mapping mineral occurrences and mineral deposits in order to increase mining investment in Manitoba.

The AMM also raised disaster financial assistance with the Minister and stressed that for disaster assistance to be effective, an equitable and fair system must be in place where all three levels of government work together. The AMM stressed the need to increase the compensation above 16% for municipalities that use their own labour and equipment, as this system only penalizes municipalities for reducing costs.

The AMM also raised the Provincial Water Bomber Policy with the Minister and expressed concern that this new policy means municipalities will have to consider costs when making these major life and death decisions. The AMM urged the Province to change its policy on billing municipalities for the costs of using water bombers.

The AMM also raised the need to provide municipalities with assistance in completing the EMO certification process as well as the need to provide compensation to municipalities for providing community hostings.

Minister Smith committed to reviewing the AMM's position on these issue and taking them forward to his Provincial colleagues.

Minister Robinson

The AMM met with Minister Robinson on April 27th and began the meeting by raising a pair of library issues: the need to increase the per capita operating grants for libraries and joining established regional libraries. The AMM stressed the need for greater funds for libraries as well as the need to allow ratepayers to access those libraries closest to them.

The Minister indicated that there was a small increase in this year's budget and he would continue to push for greater increases for library funding and work with the AMM to find a mutually acceptable solution for getting ratepayers access to the libraries closest to them.

The AMM also raised the need for greater funding for the Community Places Program and expressed disappointment with the reduction of funding for the program in this year's budget, as well as the change to the funding formula. The Minister indicated that the formula was changed to better reflect the formula being used currently. As well, he indicated that the reduction in funding for the program was a result of the difficult fiscal realities facing the Province.

The AMM also received an overview of the new Tourism Manitoba Agency that the Province is looking to create.

The AMM will be following up shortly with the Ministers on these issues. Copies of the position papers presented to the Ministers are available on the AMM website at www.amm.mb.ca/provministermeetings.ca.

The AMM will continue to raise municipal funding priorities with the Provincial Government in the upcoming year. The Provincial Budget is available online at www.gov.mb.ca/finance/budget04

From the AMM Office ...

Notices

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 have been planned to help municipalities with the process. The schedule for workshops is:

Monday, May 31, 2004
Thompson - Provincial Building,
Room 102- 9am to 4pm

Tuesday, June 1, 2004
The Pas - Kikiwak Inn,
Constant Room- 9am to 4pm

Wednesday, June 2, 2004
Winnipeg - Convention Centre,
Meeting Room 2E - 9 am to 4pm

Thursday, June 3, 2004
Brandon - Keystone Centre,
Assembly Hall- 9am to 4pm

For further information about the program or to confirm your attendance at one of the workshops, please contact Andrew Cowan at 204-945-6099 before May 21st.

CPP Applications Available

Grant applications are available for the Community Places Program (CPP). The CCP helps upgrade, repair and renovate existing facilities or build new community facilities. This year eligible projects can receive up to 50 per cent of the first \$15,000 of total costs and up to one-third of costs over that amount from the program. For more information please call the Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism office in your region or the CPP Office in Winnipeg at 945-0502, 1-800-894-3777 or email at mcpp@gov.mb.ca. The deadline for applications is May 10th.

Deadline

June 9th Deadline for June Districts Resolutions

The AMM would like to inform municipalities that the resolutions deadline for this year's June District Meetings is Wednesday, June 9th, 2004. Please submit resolutions to AMM Director of Policy and Communications Tyler MacAfee at the AMM office prior to this date.

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Portage la Prairie, MB
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Email: tmacafee@amm.mb.ca

Job Postings

Chief Administrative Officer

The RM of Clanwilliam and the Town of Erickson are seeking applicants for the position of CAO. Under the direction of council, the CAO is responsible for the overall management of the operations of the joint office of the RM and Town. The successful candidate will possess the following:

1. Graduate of the four year Manitoba Certificate Program for Municipal Administration.
2. Direct experience in municipal administration
3. The ability to develop, interpret and administer agreements, statutes and by-laws.
4. The ability to communicate effectively with the public, employees and external stakeholders.
5. Experience in Munisoft will be considered an asset.

Salary range is dependent upon qualifications and experience. An attractive benefit package is also provided.

Applications are to be clearly marked "Application for Chief Administrative Officer" and "Confidential" and should contain a full resume and three references. Applications to be forwarded to :

RM of Clanwilliam and Town of Erickson
Attention: Search Committee
PO Box 40
Erickson MB R0J 0P0

Web Site: townerrickson.ca
Deadline May 15, 2004.
Employment Start Date: July 1, 2004.

For Sale

Used Equipment

One 1997 Brush Bandit Model 60 Brush Chipper C/w Auto Feed and 20 HP Kohler Engine. Like new, used very few hours. Paid over \$10,000.00, asking \$8,000.00 or best offer. First reasonable offer takes it. Contact:

RM of Rosser
Box 131
Rosser MB R0H 1E0
Ph 204-467-5711
Fax 204-467-5958