

Lobby Days Receive Favourable Response

Two-day blitz of Manitoba Legislature promotes shared priorities

The AMM met with more than 30 MLAs over a two-day blitz of the Manitoba Legislature on April 19 and 20, 2005. The purpose of the meetings, coined "Lobby Days" and based on a model developed by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), was to meet with backbenchers not always privy to the concerns and priorities of Manitoba municipalities. MLAs who met with the AMM included members of the Winnipeg and Rural/Northern NDP caucuses, members of the Official Opposition, and members of the Liberal party.

During the meetings, the AMM briefed the MLAs on three top priority issues: education funding from property, water and land use planning, and a new deal for municipalities. AMM President Ron Bell was pleased with the response. "We found that, regardless of political stripe, education funding from property is a shared concern," noted Bell. "Virtually every MLA we spoke to acknowledged the need for further improvements in this area. While this has been the number one concern of our members for several years, having it recognized by so many MLAs in such a short period of time really confirms we are on the right track with this issue."

The AMM also filled the members in on their push for per capita funding of new deal money. While the AMM is pleased with the commitment on the part of the Federal Government of \$167 million over the next five years and \$20 million this year to Manitoba cities and communities, a method of distribution has yet to be decided upon for Manitoba. "We believe this funding should be distributed on a per capita basis, as it is the quickest and cleanest way to get the money into the hands of the communities that need it," said Bell. "Many of the MLAs we spoke to were interested in hearing more about this issue, and concurred that per capita only seems reasonable as every municipality has infrastructure needs, regardless of size."

The brief presented to MLAs during Lobby Days is available on the AMM website at www.amm.mb.ca. ■

Minister Meetings Continue

The AMM met with two Provincial Cabinet Ministers on March 30, 2005 – The **Honourable Christine Melnick**, Minister of Family Services and Housing, and the **Honourable Diane McGifford**, Minister of Advanced Education and Training.

The AMM began the meeting with Minister Melnick by highlighting housing needs across the province. The Minister indicated that they are working on signing Phase 2 of the Affordable Housing Initiative (AHI) with the Federal Government and this will be focused on low income housing, not just affordable housing.

The Minister also indicated that her department has just hired a Northern Housing Coordinator who will be working out of Thompson.

The AMM expressed appreciation for the recent increase in funding for the Neighbourhoods Alive! program but indicated that the scope of the program needs to be extended to more communities across the Province. The Minister agreed to take this issue forward to the committee.

Other departmental issues discussed with Minister Melnick included the problem of perpetually vacant buildings and the Proposal Development Funding (PDF) process.

The AMM also raised the issues of education funding and land use and water planning with Minister Melnick.

The AMM began the meeting with Minister McGifford by discussing the need to remove education tax from property. The Minister agreed that this is not a rural issue but she questioned where the money would come from to cover this.

The AMM also raised the issue of land use and water planning with the Minister. She indicated that there is a process in place for public input for all bills, including the ones raised.

The AMM also raised some issues they heard at the recent round of Mayors, Reeves and CAO's meetings. The first was the lack of level 3 and 4 training for water and wastewater operators. The Minister indicated that it is likely these courses will be offered soon in Manitoba and will let the AMM know when this is finalized.

The AMM also raised the issue of spaces at the university for physician training. The Minister responded that the Province has put funding in place for 100 spaces, but these will take time to fill. The Minister agreed that having only 20 per cent rural students in the faculty is a problem, however she noted the number of rural students in all faculties is low. Her department is looking at rolling out bursaries or perhaps other incentives to get more rural students involved.

The Minister also indicated that the Assiniboine Community College is rolling out two new programs that could be of interest to municipalities – GIS Environmental Technology Diploma and Land and Water Management – and these should see graduates in the next year. ■

Complete policy papers from all meetings with Ministers are available on the AMM website:

[WWW.AMM.MB.CA/
POLICIES.HTM](http://www.amm.mb.ca/POLICIES.HTM)

From the AMM Office...

June District Meetings

Election for AMM Board of Directors

The AMM will conduct elections for the Board of Directors at June District Meetings this year. The Board shall be comprised of Elected Officials representing one of eight Districts:

| | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Parklands | 2 representatives |
| Western | 2 representatives |
| Mid-Western | 2 representatives |
| Central | 2 representatives |
| Eastern | 2 representatives |
| Interlake | 2 representatives |
| Northern | 1 representative |
| Winnipeg | 1 representative |

All elected officials and the CAOs of any Member of the District is entitled to vote at the annual District meeting. Nominations will be made from the floor. The term of office is two years.

For more information, please contact:

Joe Masi, AMM Executive Director
Ph: (204) 856-2360
Email: jmasi@amm.mb.ca

June District Resolutions

Please submit all duly passed resolutions for consideration at the June District Meetings to:

Tyler MacAfee, AMM Director of Policy & Communications
Ph: (204) 856-2362
Email: tmacafee@amm.mb.ca
Please submit by June 9, 2005

For June District Meeting dates and locations, visit:

www.amm.mb.ca/events.htm

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May 6, 2005

Clarion Inn & Suites, Winnipeg, MB

For more information, visit:

www.amm.mb.ca/education.htm

Or, call:

Donna Belbin, Events Coordinator
Phone: 204-856-2374 or
Email: dbelbin@amm.mb.ca

Notices

Compulsory Certification in the Plumber Trade

The Manitoba Apprenticeship and Trades Qualification Board is considering a recommendation from the Plumber Provincial Trade Advisory Committee that all people working in the Plumber Trade be required to have certification.

The Apprenticeship Branch of Manitoba Advanced Education and Training has retained Meyers Norris Penny LLP to conduct an impact study for compulsory certification in the Plumber Trade in Manitoba. If you currently work in the plumber trade, own a plumbing business or are currently training to work in the plumber trade, the Apprenticeship Branch would like your input. A survey is available at:

www.mnp.ca/plumbersurvey

Your input is extremely important. If you have any questions, please contact:

Greg Lamothe, MNP Project Manager

204-788-6095

Effective immediately, the AMM will no longer accept "For Sale" ads for the bi-weekly news bulletin.

Job Postings

District Manager—East Interlake Conservation District

The East Interlake Conservation District (EICD) requires a Manager to provide direction and technical expertise toward the development of watershed and aquifer planning and implementation initiatives.

Graduation from a recognized program in natural resource management, Environmental Sciences and/or Environmental Engineering/Technical program and/or extensive experience in resource program planning and management through knowledge of agricultural land use and fundamental watershed principles, strong interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate verbally and in writing.

Applicants should forward their resumes (including list of references and salary expectations) by 4:00 p.m., Friday May 06, 2005 to:

**East Interlake Conservation District
Box 689, Arborg, Manitoba R0C 0A0**

Economic Development Officer RM of Strathclair

The Economic Development Officer will be responsible for promoting the sustainable development of the local economy within the Rural Municipality of Strathclair by attracting investment into the Municipality. The position will require consulting the business community on local, regional and national issues, advising Council, working with the R.M. of Strathclair C.D.C., and other responsibilities.

Excellent communication skills are required, along with excellent organizational and marketing skills. Studies including general business, marketing, economics and planning are considered an asset.

Applications may be submitted to the R.M. of Strathclair office until May 3, 2005 at 5:00 p.m.

Shelley Glenn, CAO, RM of Strathclair
127 Minnedosa St., P.O. Box 160
Strathclair, Mb. R0J 2C0