



NEWS BULLETIN



DECEMBER 9, 2008

AMM Meets with Premier, Cabinet

The annual meeting with the Premier and Cabinet took place on November 27, 2008. In attendance were Ministers Ashton, Bjornson, Struthers, Wowchuk, Swan, Oswald, Rondeau, Melnick, and Lemieux.

President Bell opened the meeting by reviewing the need for new revenues for municipalities as well as the need to accelerate infrastructure spending in light of the current economic situation. Premier Doer recognized the need for infrastructure investment and indicated that the Province would have preferred the GST to

remain at 6% with 1% allocated to infrastructure. Canadian premiers also support FCM's demand for additional infrastructure investment. The Province has requested that Federal infrastructure funding be enhanced, accelerated, and streamlined.

President Bell suggested that if the Province were to consider reducing taxes (ex. income tax), consideration should be given to leaving the tax in place and allocating the funds to infrastructure. Ontario committed to deliver a certain portion of any future surplus to municipalities and this may be an option for Manitoba as well.

President Bell then raised the need for all Provincial departments to maintain open communications with AMM, due to recent concerns with the Public Utilities Board (PUB). Municipalities feel that PUB has gone beyond the mandate of representing consumer interests regarding rate setting and are attempting to control administrative requirements. Premier Doer acknowl-

edged the Province does not always agree with PUB decisions but emphasized the importance of the PUB process. There is a growing public demand for transparency and accountability, and Minister Ashton committed to explore ways of addressing these concerns.

Two of the AMM's most critical meetings of the year take place each fall. One is a meeting with Premier Doer and members of Provincial Cabinet. The other is with Finance Minister Greg Selinger to present the AMM's budget priorities for the year.

Manitoba colleges can take to resolve the operator training issues. Minister Melnick indicated that Water Stewardship is already working on this issue. Premier Doer also discussed the need to establish thresholds for when drainage licenses are required. Minister Melnick noted that her department is working on a process and will consult with municipalities and AMM prior to implementation.

VP Dobrowolski then outlined the need to improve Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) for preventative measures in order to be cost effective over the long-term. Premier Doer indicated that it makes sense to provide funding to fix problems over the long-term rather than repeatedly funding the same inadequate projects. He committed to ensuring that Provincial DFA is consistent with the Federal principles. Minister Ashton also recognized the issue of DFA not covering flood protection for an event that doesn't materialize. ■

President Bell then turned the meeting over to Vice-President Dobrowolski who raised concerns with recent water legislation, the need for a coordinated drainage plan, and certification of water and wastewater facility operators. Premier Doer committed to determining what actions

The AMM met with Minister Selinger on October 30, and opened the meeting by seeking an update on Manitoba's economic situation. The Minister indicated that he was confident Manitoba could weather the storm. The Province will continue to invest in infrastructure and is looking for a similar commitment from the Federal Government.

The AMM also raised the topic of alternate revenues with Minister Selinger. The Minister indicated that he recognized the problem and thought that the economic slowdown might give municipalities greater value for dollars. The Province has been making the case to the Federal Government that they need to flow funds quickly. The Minister indicated he didn't expect any drastic changes in the near future as the Province's approach is a balanced approach with no major deviations.

Drainage, CD funding and water legislation were also discussed. The Minister noted the Province will be reviewing the need for assistance for the drainage situation in the Interlake. On water legislation, the Minister committed to asking about the consultation process in his discussions with Water Stewardship.

The AMM also raised the requirement for community capital contributions for health facilities, and the stress this places on municipalities. The Minister indicated that the demand for health capital is three times the amount available, but noted the Province is committed to doing what it can to move projects forward.

The AMM also thanked the Minister for the change to 65% of municipal costs for disaster financial assistance, but noted the issue of improvements and replacement still needs to be addressed. ■

Notices



2009 FCM-CH2M HILL Sustainable Community Awards

The 2009 FCM-CH2M HILL Sustainable Community Awards celebrate excellence in sustainable community development by highlighting the best municipal initiatives that link environmental, social and economic goals.

Awards will be granted in eight categories: brownfields, buildings, energy, planning, residential development, transportation, waste and water. **Applications are due by December 11, 2008.**

For more information:

E-mail: awards@fcm.ca

Tel.: (613) 907-6358

Fax: (613) 244-1515

Visit <http://>

www.sustainablecommunities.fcm.ca/Home/

Seeking Environmental and Financial Expertise for the Green Municipal Fund Peer Review Committee

FCM is seeking technical and financial experts in brownfields, energy, planning, transportation, waste and water to join its Green Municipal Fund™ (GMF) Peer Review Committee. Committee members evaluate the grant and loan applications submitted by Canadian municipalities and make recommendations for approval.

Applicants will be required to send a letter of intent, curriculum vitae and three letters of recommendation acknowledging their expertise in one or more GMF sector: brownfields, energy, planning, transportation, waste or water.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the GMF Peer Review Committee, please submit the required documents no later than **Monday, December 15, 2008**, to:

Katursia DelHomme

Admin. Assistant, Green Municipal Fund

kdelhomme@fcm.ca

or by fax to **613.244.1515**

Final decisions will be made by March 2009.

Coming Events

Small Systems Nutrient Removal Seminar

January 15 & 16, 2009

Canad Inns, Polo Park

1405 St. Matthews Ave., Winnipeg, MB

Registration limited to the first 100

Topics to be covered include:

- *Nutrient removal regulatory issues and policy initiatives*
- *Nutrient removal basics*
- *Comparison of lagoon based technologies for nutrient removal*
- *Mechanical plant technologies for small systems*
- *Wetlands for nutrient removal*
- *Case studies*
- *Sludge management*
- *Operations issues panel discussion*

Cost: Members \$300.00, non-members \$400.00, students \$50.00 (plus GST)

To register: Western Canada Water
Box 1708, 126 3rd Avenue West
Cochrane, Alberta T4C 1B6

Ph: 403.709.0064 or 1.877.283.2003

Fax: 403.709.0068 or 1.877.283.2007

E-Mail: member@wcwwa.ca

Web: www.wcwwa.ca

Prix Les Arts Et La Ville 2009 Concours

Les Arts et la Ville network is proud to announce the third edition of a competition aiming to underscore municipalities supporting the cultural development of francophones in their community. This competition is open to all municipalities in Canadian provinces and territories, with the exception of Québec. Municipalities may file their project alone or in collaboration with an artistic or cultural organization.

How to apply: Fill out the online application at www.artsville.org, under "Activities" **before March 6, 2009.**

For more information, contact:

Martin Valiquette

T. 418 691-7480

E. recherche@arts-ville.org

W. www.arts-ville.org

870, avenue de Salaberry, bureau 104
Québec (Québec) G1R 2T9

Coming Events

SWANA

Northern Lights Chapter

Presents Our 2009 Conference
**Small Market Sustainability:
Size Matters!**

May 11-14 2009

Victoria Inn Hotel & Convention
Centre - Winnipeg, MB

This Unique Event Offers:

- *3 Technical Program Streams - Waste Management; Public Works and Shared Issues*
- *Our Trade Show and Site Tours will likewise showcase exhibitor-sand venues to compliment this innovative 3-Stream Program*
- *Certification training recognized by industry and government as the best in the business, with courses in Landfill Management and Transfer Station Operator*

For more information:

www.swanacpwa.ca

2010 Olympic Torch Relay

The 2010 Olympic Torch Relay will be the longest in history to be contained within the Host Country.



Eight communities across Manitoba have been chosen to participate in the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay community celebrations. They are Brandon, Churchill, Neepawa, Portage la Prairie, Steinbach, Thompson, Winkler, and Winnipeg.

Participate in the lead-up to the 2010 Olympic Winter Games by joining in a community celebration or watching the Olympic Flame as it passes through an area near you. The list of communities as well as an interactive map is available on the Vancouver 2010 website at

<http://www.vancouver2010.com>