

Looking back in ORDER TO LOOK AHEAD



Joe Masi, Executive Director

The AMM 11th Annual Convention has come and gone and if the success of an event can be measured by the “buzz” generated by its speakers, then our event was very successful indeed. The AMM always strives to provide high quality speakers for our membership and yet I believe we outdid even ourselves this time around. I know I appreciated the once in a lifetime opportunity to see and hear Senator **Roméo Dallaire** as much as all of you did! Our other keynote speakers – **David Barber** and **David Foot** – were also excellent and gave us plenty to think about as we move forward in this new decade. In my opinion our Convention is one of the highest quality municipal events in Canada and I believe we demonstrated that ably in 2009.

One of the first official activities of the New Year for the AMM Board of Directors is strategic planning. This year's strategic planning session was held in early January, and while part of the session focuses on topics such as board governance and approaches to lobbying, it is primarily an exercise in defining our goals for the year. We began by recapping the previous year's plan and reviewing the status of the priority areas identified.

OVER THE PAST YEAR, THE AMM:

- Made infrastructure and the need for alternate revenue our top issue and saw the global economic crisis result in further investments in infrastructure;
- Focused on downloading and unfunded mandates by surveying our members to find out they are increasingly taking responsibility for areas not typically municipal in nature, or dealing with new provincial regulations without accompanying funding;
- Continued to push for movement on the recycling file and saw the new stewardship regulation for packaging and printed paper coming into effect, along with throne speech promises

to tackle electronic and household hazardous waste; and

- Made progress on water issues by working with the Province and the Conservation District Association on a CD framework, receiving increased funding for drainage and sitting on the Manitoba Water Services Board.

Not surprisingly, our focus areas for 2010 will be much the same – infrastructure, the need for alternate revenue and funding for new mandates. One task will be to keep infrastructure and the need for alternate revenue at the top of our agenda now that those large investments in infrastructure have all but come to an end. In terms of both the need for alternate revenue and the downloading issue, the Province has opened the door to a discussion on the 4Rs – the roles, responsibilities, resources and relationships between the Province and municipalities – something the AMM has been pushing for some time. In addition, focus will return to the reduction of education tax on property.

With the strategic plan in place, it is time to turn our attention to the regular member events taking place in 2010. Our municipal visits have begun and we will soon be in the midst of Mayors, Reeves and CAOs meetings. Plans are well underway for the Municipal Officials Seminar and MTCML Trade Show in April. District meetings will follow in June, and we've even begun planning the 12th Annual Convention! It truly never stops and that is one of the reasons why our association is successful. If lobbying is our work, then our members are the glue that holds everything together. Each and every time we can come together to forward our goals, we become stronger. Thank you for your continued support in our events and I look forward to seeing you throughout the coming year.

Happy New Year! 🍷

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