



NEWS BULLETIN



JUNE 30, 2010

JUNE MINISTER MEETINGS

The AMM met with Minister of Innovation, Energy and Mines *Dave Chomiak* on June 1, 2010, raising several issues—biodiesel and ethanol initiatives, wind power, and mining in Northern Manitoba.

The AMM began by stressing that biofuels provide an opportunity for communities to participate in a growing industry, and urged the Province to support the development of production facilities in Manitoba. The AMM also pointed out that wind energy stimulates regional economies by creating jobs as well as demand for equipment and materials. The AMM would like to see the Province provide incentives in this area as well as develop a standard offer contract for community wind projects.

The Minister indicated the Province would like to do as much as possible in this area, and it is in the process of developing a wind atlas to aid in future development. One of the challenges for wind in Manitoba is the cheap rates for hydro which means wind energy must also be cheap to compete.

The province is also looking at other options like biomass and solar power, along with methane capture at landfills and electric car options. The Minister feels Manitoba is poised to be a leader in the green economy.

Manitoba Hydro has to date shown no interest in the issue of standard offer contracts.

On mining in Northern Manitoba, the AMM stressed that the Mining Community Reserve Fund is a critical program, yet municipalities are concerned the Fund is increasingly being used for exploration activity. The AMM urged the Province to ensure that adequate supports are available for single-industry communities.

Minister Chomiak noted the exploration fund receives anything over \$10M in the reserve

fund, but he believes the mining sector is rebounding. The Province assisted mining communities by funding community economic development positions and is working with Leaf Rapids on a housing maintenance program.

The AMM met with the Minister of Family Services *Gord Mackintosh* on June 2, 2010, opening with the issue of funding for childcare across Manitoba.

Childcare services are a critical part of a thriving economy, but in order for economic development spinoffs to be effective they must create attractive, well-paying jobs. Both childcare workers and childcare assistants require improved remuneration in all areas of the province.

Position papers from all AMM Minister Meetings are available at http://www.amm.mb.ca/pol_provincial.html

The Minister indicated that there are 6,500 more spaces and 35 more day-care sites, and the Province is looking closely at rural needs and shift work spaces. The Province is testing several ideas in rural centres and will measure their success. The Province is also working on training outside Winnipeg.

The AMM then raised the cost of survey monument restoration. The Minister indicated program funds have increased and all of the money has not been allocated some years. He did indicate he was willing to review this should there be a need for more funding, but added technology may make the need to replace monuments obsolete.

Issues with the Public Utilities Board (PUB) were then raised, as municipalities are finding the orders issued by the PUB increasingly cumbersome and invasive. The AMM would like to see the PUB improve its communication with municipalities.

The Minister indicated that the PUB is independent and not controlled by the Province, but he did commit to raising the issue of better coordination between the PUB and the Municipal Board.

A meeting with Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs *Eric Robison* took place on June 8, 2010, and the AMM began by raising the issue of First Nation and municipal government relations. The AMM has repeatedly raised the need for more timely settlements and although the Province has committed to improve the process, inefficiencies remain. The AMM urged a review of the current TLE process in order to remove obstacles and allow municipalities and First Nations to build stronger, more cooperative working relationships.

The Minister expressed frustration with this issue again being on the agenda and instructed AMM to meet with the deputy minister to draft a new policy.

The AMM then raised the issue of funding for Port of Churchill and Northern Rail Lines. The AMM would like the Province to recognize the valuable services provided by Manitoba's rail lines and the Port of Churchill, to address the economic and environmental impacts of rail line abandonment and to ensure that these concerns are reflected in the upcoming review of *The Provincial Railways Act*.

The Minister expressed frustration with Omnitrax and the current state of the northern rail line, as he fully appreciates the importance of the line to Northern Manitoba. ■

Notices



AMM Office Closure - Summer Fridays

The AMM Office will be closed on the following Fridays this year:

July 2nd
July 16th
July 30th
August 13th

Thank you

To our hosts for the 2010 June District Meetings:

- City of Dauphin and RM of Dauphin
- Town of Gladstone and RM of Westbourne
- RM of Woodworth
- Town of Manitou and RM of Pembina
- City of Steinbach
- RM of Armstrong
- City of Flin Flon

Your hospitality was outstanding!

Visit our recap of this year's June District meetings at http://www.amm.mb.ca/events_june2010.html

Resolutions, photos, presentations, and more!

Coming Events

Western Canada Cemetery Association 24TH CONVENTION & TRADESHOW—WINNIPEG September 12th - 14th

Not to be missed if you operate a cemetery!

Do you feel buried in the muddy bog of modern day cemetery management and in need of some advice, sharing of ideas and learning to help you through? Have you needed to find the answer to a difficult or new situation? Have you had to say no to a client and felt maybe it wasn't the best decision?

If you just answered yes to any of the above questions, then the WCCA Convention is for you. This year's theme 'Through The Mire' has events planned to help you find your way through the mire of cemetery business. Visit <http://westerncemetery.com/files/File/forms/wccamembershipapp.pdf> for the excellent line up of knowledgeable speakers and special events.



Coming Soon...

Summer, 2010 issue of *The Municipal Leader*, including:

- **Special Report:** *The HR Challenge*
- **Municipal Profile**—retiring elected officials
- 2010 Lobby Days
- Ballot Box Barriers
- Municipal Excellence Award
- And much more!

Announcements



Congratulations to AMM Director of Policy and Communications Tyler MacAfee and his wife Erin on the birth of their new baby daughter Grace, a sister for Katie.

Grace was born on June 28 at 22:51 weighing in at 8 lbs. 2 oz. and 20 inches long.

Wishing you a safe and enjoyable summer!

From the Board of Directors and Staff of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities.

