



ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA MUNICIPALITIES

MEETING WITH

Honourable Gord Mackintosh
Minister of Family Services and Consumer Affairs

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Departmental Issues	6
1. <i>Funding for Childcare Across Manitoba</i>	6
2. <i>Costs of Survey Monument Restoration</i>	8
3. <i>Issues with the Public Utilities Board</i>	9
General Issue.....	10
<i>The Core Challenges for Municipalities</i>	10
<i>Municipal Infrastructure Deficit</i>	10
<i>Ever Increasing Responsibilities</i>	12
<i>Alternate Revenues</i>	13
Appendix A – Active Resolutions.....	17

Executive Summary

Departmental Issues

1. Funding for Childcare Across Manitoba

- Municipalities are primarily concerned with the sufficient availability of childcare since these services are a critical part of a thriving economy.
- High quality childcare services make important contributions to the local economy due to the extensive spinoff benefits they generate.
- However, in order for economic development initiatives to be effective they must create attractive, well-paying jobs and the Province has a responsibility to ensure that operating grants for childcare centres will make a substantial contribution to offering competitive wages for childcare workers.
- The Province should also reconsider the minimum starting wage for childcare assistants, particularly given the commitment to increase Manitoba's minimum wage.
- This urgent need requires both immediate and long-term action by the Provincial Government to address the needs of families and childcare facilities throughout Manitoba.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to implement the Family Choices agenda in a manner that maximizes the immediate impacts on expanded childcare services and improved worker remuneration in all areas of the province.

2. Costs of Survey Monument Restoration

- An issue that is frequently raised by our members is the cost of restoring survey monuments.
- While these monuments play an important role, often survey work can be done without having each monument replaced as many municipalities have done extensive mapping and there may be opportunities to find the required information without necessarily requiring monuments to be restored.
- While replacing a single monument is not a major expense for a municipality, it can become expensive if they are expected to replace numerous monuments in a single year.
- Unfortunately individuals do not approach the municipality to see if the information is already available, and rather immediately request the monument be restored.

- Our association believes that if the cost of restoration was passed on to the individual alternative options would be explored more often, resulting in overall cost savings.

Therefore the AMM requests the Province work with municipalities to promote alternatives to survey monument restoration where ever possible.

3. Issues with the Public Utilities Board

- In recent years municipalities have become more and more frustrated with the Public Utilities Board (PUB) and are finding the orders issued by the PUB increasingly cumbersome and invasive.
- The AMM has had the opportunity to meet with the PUB a few times in the last two years and has begun a dialogue toward a more cooperative approach.
- Through this dialogue we have discovered that one of the issues with the PUB is that their only real form of communication with municipalities is through public orders. Often a less severe means of communications would be more effective.

Therefore the AMM would like to see an expansion of communication options for the Public Utility Board to ensure a more cooperative approach with municipalities.

General Issue

The Core Challenges for Municipalities

- Municipal government plays a greater role in the lives of Canadians than any other time in history and the new realities facing municipalities have serious repercussions as they diligently try to balance growing responsibilities with stagnant revenues.
- Municipal infrastructure is the very foundation of a community, yet its current state leaves communities with little hope for prosperity. Nationally the municipal infrastructure deficit is in excess of \$123 billion and provincially it is estimated at over \$11 billion, or a staggering \$10,000 per Manitoban.
- As well, municipal responsibilities continue to grow, either through the intentional or unintentional offloading of responsibilities or new unfunded mandates being forced on municipalities.
- Because of these challenges municipalities must have access to new sources of revenues. Options include the Province collecting a one cent municipal tax to be allocated to municipalities for infrastructure, a rebate of the Provincial Sales Tax paid by municipalities, or an increase to existing revenue sources such as VLTs.

- Manitoba municipalities are more reliant on provincial and federal grants than any other province in Canada and while in some cases these types of programs are necessary it leaves municipalities having to compete against each other for limited dollars and restricts a municipality's ability to properly plan for much needed investment.
- For municipal government to be sustainable into the future, and for Manitobans to have access to the quality of life they deserve, municipalities need to have access to sustainable growth revenues. This is the only way municipalities will be able to even begin to address the core challenges they face.

Therefore the AMM would like to see:

- 1. A greater investment in municipal infrastructure by all levels of government**
- 2. An end to the downloading of responsibilities to municipalities and a requirement that new mandates come with new funding**
- 3. A commitment to provide new alternate revenues to municipalities**

Departmental Issues

1. Funding for Childcare Across Manitoba

Communities throughout Manitoba are facing severe shortages of childcare spaces that are directly related to years of insufficient capital and operating funding for childcare facilities. Even with recent increases from the Provincial Government, low wages for early childhood educators have led to a critical province-wide staffing shortage that obstructs the provision of high quality childcare services. Although childcare is not a direct municipal service, municipalities certainly have a vested interest in the local availability of childcare since these services have major impacts on community well-being. Studies consistently show that the provision of local childcare opportunities has a direct impact on increased regional economic development. For this reason, municipalities appreciate the Province's introduction of the Family Choices agenda to initiate a multi-faceted approach to addressing childcare constraints throughout Manitoba. This plan is expected to create significant long-term benefits; however the severity of the existing demand for investment requires a plan that also has considerable immediate impacts.

Municipalities are primarily concerned with the sufficient availability of childcare since these services are a critical part of a thriving economy. Economic development is one of the biggest factors in community sustainability as it assists municipalities in attracting and retaining residents. A thriving local economy supplies the goods and services that its residents require while also providing employment opportunities. High quality childcare services make comparable contributions to the local economy due to the extensive spinoff benefits they generate. A 2007 study estimated that every \$1 spent on childcare in Manitoba generates \$1.58 worth of economic activity. This occurs as the wages earned by families using childcare and those employed in the childcare sector are in turn spent in the wider economy, thereby supporting local economic development. In Manitoba, 0.49 jobs are created or supported by every one full-time child care position. This translates to a significant increase in the earning power of families using childcare. Childcare facilities also support the viability of other businesses by purchasing food and other supplies locally, as well as hiring local tradespeople for ongoing maintenance. Since there are such strong links between

childcare services and economic development, municipalities are keenly interested in expanding the availability and accessibility of childcare services.

However, in order for economic development initiatives to be effective they must create attractive, well-paying jobs. Much of the reason that child care facilities struggle to meet the demands of Manitoba families is that not enough people are attracted to a career in early childhood education. Current wage levels are a significant obstacle in this regard, yet there are limits on the fees that parents can pay since the cost of childcare should not deter parents' labour force participation. Therefore, the Province has a responsibility to ensure that operating grants for childcare centres will make a substantial contribution to offering competitive wages for childcare workers.

This includes a consideration of the minimum starting wage for childcare assistants, particularly in light of the Provincial commitment to increase Manitoba's minimum wage. At present, some childcare facilities can only offer a starting wage that is marginally above the current minimum wage, and therefore there is not a sufficient incentive for individuals to pursue a career in the childcare field. As the provincial minimum wage increases, there are implications not only for the starting wages at these facilities, but for slightly more experienced staff who has already received increments and yet are currently only slightly above the new minimum wages recently implemented. Increasing the minimum wage necessitates an overall increase in childcare staff wages to ensure that the entire pay scale adequately reflects the experience and training of the staff. While there are certain regional factors that will inevitably affect wage rates in various communities, all childcare facilities should have the resources to offer reasonably competitive wages and benefits.

The AMM appreciates the Province's recognition of this critical need through the 2008 Budget commitment to fund more spaces, establish a training and recruitment fund and increase salaries for early childhood educators. As the five-year Family Choices agenda is implemented there will certainly be long-term impacts for communities throughout Manitoba. Many of the commitments related to establishing additional spaces and training will require significant lead time, and a high priority must be given to fulfilling these commitments expeditiously. The AMM was pleased to see the

commitment in the 2010 Budget to establish a pension program for child care workers as this will certainly assist in addressing the retention of valuable staff.

This urgent need requires both immediate and long-term action by the Provincial Government to address the needs of families and childcare facilities throughout Manitoba. The AMM appreciates the Province's commitment to improve Manitoba's childcare services and communities are looking forward to the potential gains stemming from the implementation of the Family Choices agenda.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to implement the Family Choices agenda in a manner that maximizes the immediate impacts on expanded childcare services and improved worker remuneration in all areas of the province.

2. Costs of Survey Monument Restoration

An issue that is frequently raised by our members is the cost of restoring survey monuments. While these monuments play an important role, often survey work can be done without having each monument replaced. Many municipalities have done extensive mapping and there may be opportunities to find the required information without necessarily requiring monuments to be restored.

While replacing a single monument is not a major expense for a municipality, it can become expensive if they are expected to replace numerous monuments in a single year. It is also impossible to budget for these unexpected expenses, and they often leave municipalities scrambling to find funds to cover what is often an unnecessary expense. Unfortunately individuals do not approach the municipality to see if the information is already available, and rather immediately request the monument be restored. Our association believes that if the cost of restoration was passed on to the individual alternative options would be explored more often, resulting in overall cost savings.

Therefore the AMM requests the Province work with municipalities to promote alternatives to survey monument restoration where ever possible.

3. Issues with the Public Utilities Board

In recent years municipalities have become more and more frustrated with the Public Utilities Board (PUB). While the mandate of the PUB is to regulate rates for municipally owned and operated water and sewer utilities outside the City of Winnipeg, municipalities are finding the orders issued by the PUB increasingly cumbersome and invasive.

The AMM has had the opportunity to meet with the PUB a few times in the last two years and has begun a dialogue toward a more cooperative approach. Through this dialogue we have discovered that one of the issues with the PUB is that their only real form of communication with municipalities is through public orders. In many cases a less severe approach would be more effective and we would recommend an expansion of options for the PUB to communicate with municipalities. Municipalities have expressed frustration with the overbearing nature of the PUB and many believe the PUB could be more effective in an advisory capacity rather than as a regulator.

Therefore the AMM would like to see an expansion of communication options for the Public Utility Board to ensure a more cooperative approach with municipalities.

General Issue

The Core Challenges for Municipalities

Today's municipal government plays a greater role in the lives of Canadians than any other time in history. Municipalities no longer simply plow the streets and pick up the garbage. Sure today's municipal corporation still cleans the streets and collects garbage (and recyclables), but it also is sustainably managing growth through everything from state of the art transit systems to environmentally conscious land use and water planning. The pioneers of municipal government would be astonished to see today's council agenda where elected officials are doing everything from recruiting doctors from around the world to providing funding for daycares.

These new realities are having serious repercussions for municipalities as they diligently try to balance growing responsibilities with stagnant revenues. Everyday municipalities are facing new demands from both citizens and other orders of government and must try to balance these with existing priorities and scarce revenues that remain overly reliant on the ebb and flow of grant programs. The current challenges facing municipalities are overwhelming and there must be a greater effort to address these if we want to see strong vibrant communities throughout our province.

While municipal concerns cut across every provincial department, there are two core issues that are most pressing for municipalities today - the ballooning municipal infrastructure deficit and the growing mandate of municipal government, either through intentional and unintentional offloading of responsibilities from other orders of government and unfunded mandates. These two challenges are crippling municipal government and keeping Manitoba communities behind.

Municipal Infrastructure Deficit

It is no secret that municipalities are facing nearly insurmountable infrastructure challenges. We only need to take a look around our communities to see the deteriorating state of our infrastructure. Roads that are nearly impassable due to potholes and heaving, drafty libraries with crippling heating bills, recreation complexes with leaking roofs and water and sewer treatment plants that are running beyond

capacity. These are the very foundation of a community, yet their current state leaves communities with little hope for prosperity. For Manitoba communities to thrive in the future these swelling infrastructure challenges must be addressed.

In Canada the municipal infrastructure deficit is in excess of \$123 billion for current needs. Most alarming is how quickly the deficit has been compounding, as it has doubled over the last 5 years. Equally alarming, the \$123 billion is only for the upgrade and repair of current municipal infrastructure, with another \$115 billion required for new infrastructure.¹

These national trends hold true for Manitoba as well. The City of Winnipeg has recently calculated its infrastructure deficit at \$3.8 billion for existing infrastructure and \$3.6 billion for new strategic infrastructure.² Historically the municipal infrastructure deficit outside of Winnipeg has been double that within Winnipeg so it is fair to extrapolate that the deficit outside Winnipeg is over \$7.5 billion, putting the total municipal infrastructure deficit in Manitoba in excess of \$11 billion, or a staggering \$10,000 per Manitoban. It is certainly an insurmountable amount for municipalities to tackle on their own since the total municipal taxes levied in 2007 were just over \$730,000,000.³

There is no doubt the current infrastructure deficit is crippling Manitoba's economy. Adequate infrastructure is an obvious prerequisite for economic development and unfortunately it is greatly lacking in many communities. FCM has investigated this principle in depth and found that an increase in municipal infrastructure spending of \$1 billion in 2008 (at nominal process and allocated to a representative mix of infrastructure) would increase the size of the real economy by roughly 0.13 percent or \$1.3 billion in nominal terms. While this would erode slightly over time with consistent investment, over a four year period it would still result in meaningful gains to the economy, dropping to a 0.6 percent increase in the final year. The resulting investment would be felt in the employment sector as well, since a great number of industries

¹ Saeed Mirza, "Danger Ahead: The Coming Collapse of Canada's Municipal Infrastructure", November 2007 (available at www.fcm.ca)

² City of Winnipeg Administrative Report, "Infrastructure and Possible Funding Options" Tabled at July 22nd, 2009 Council Meeting (available at www.winnipeg.ca)

³ Province of Manitoba, "Statistical Information 2007 – Municipalities of the Province of Manitoba", P.17

would benefit. A \$1 billion investment in 2008 would add 11,500 new jobs, which would be felt in industries from labour and material suppliers through to architects and engineers.⁴

Providing adequate infrastructure has both direct and indirect benefits for private-sector manufacturing. Infrastructure is an intermediate input into the production process, with businesses locating where there is access to water, hydro and transportation. New roads reduce fuel costs and haul times. Access to high quality (and adequate) water reduces input costs. There is also evidence that increased investments in public infrastructure allow private companies to use labour inputs more intensively, translating into more jobs.⁵

While the numbers are staggering, of far greater concern is the very real impact this infrastructure deficit is having on the people who live in Manitoba. Manitobans are experiencing longer commutes to work either because of impassable roads or slower speeds. We are also spending more time travelling to neighbouring communities to access recreation opportunities. Many have seen the outmigration of neighbours and friends who tire of dealing with these daily challenges.

Municipal councils want to create vibrant, welcoming communities, but this is nearly impossible with the state of infrastructure today. For example, there remain 137 boil water advisories in Manitoba, many in Manitoba municipalities.⁶ This means in 2010 thousands of Manitobans do not have access to safe drinking water when they turn on the tap. It is unreasonable to think these communities can realistically compete with the rest of Manitoba and Canada if they do not have this essential infrastructure.

Ever Increasing Responsibilities

A second core challenge for municipalities is ever increasing responsibilities. Municipalities are continually being asked to do more and more, either through the

⁴ Sonnen, Carl, "Municipal Infrastructure- Macroeconomic impacts of spending and level-of-government financing" May 31, 2008 (available at www.fcm.ca)

⁵ Brox, James A. "Infrastructure Investment: The Foundation of Canadian Competitiveness - IRPP Policy Matters 2008" August, 2008 (available at www.irpp.org)

⁶ Province of Manitoba "Provincial Boil Water Advisories" – January 11th, 2010

intentional or unintentional offloading of responsibilities from other orders of government or through new unfunded mandates being forced on municipalities by the provincial and federal government. These new responsibilities do not come with new revenue sources and result in municipal budgets being stretched thinner and thinner. The sad reality is that as municipalities are being forced to take on more the core municipal responsibilities suffer.

Municipal officials believe in their community. This is where they live, most often where they work and sometimes where they were born. They care greatly about their community and when they see a need they will do everything they can to address it. Many times municipal officials are their own worst enemy, as they step in and act where other orders of government have abdicated their responsibilities. Municipalities step up and do repairs on provincial roads, they recruit physicians from all corners of the world, and they help fund community health facilities. In some cases municipalities are just filling gaps in service unintentionally left by other orders of government and other times municipalities are stepping in because the provincial and federal governments have made it clear their community will not get the service or investment unless they do.

Compounding this is the growing trend of unfunded mandates being heaped on municipalities by the provincial and federal governments. Too often new rules are implemented without adequate thought to how they can possibly be implemented. These unilateral decisions leave municipalities in the untenable position of either scarifying core programs and services or being in non-compliance of provincial rules. Unfortunately we are hearing more and more from municipalities that they are being forced to opt for the latter.

Municipalities cannot keep pace with the rapid increase in the offloading of responsibilities and unfunded mandates. These challenges are pushing municipalities further and further behind.

Alternate Revenues

Now more than ever municipalities need new tools to deal with new responsibilities and new expectations. Currently Manitoba municipalities are more reliant on provincial and federal grants than any other province in Canada⁷. While in some cases these types of programs are necessary (for example large-scale infrastructure projects), it leaves municipalities having to compete against each other for limited dollars and restricts a municipality's ability to properly plan for much needed investment. The amount allocated to grant programs like the recent Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund or community infrastructure funding under the Building Canada Fund is nowhere near the total demand, meaning there is no guarantee much-needed projects will ever receive funding.

Over-reliance on grants and transfers leaves municipalities without the tools required to meet demands. Many municipal issues, when stripped down to their core, are really issues of access to revenue. For example, the need to remove education tax from property is really a municipal revenue issue, as municipalities see education tax as eroding the property tax base, which is the single greatest source of municipal revenue. Over the last number of years we have seen more and more municipalities speaking out on the need for greater municipal revenue sources.

It is important that the federal and provincial government contributions to municipalities are not forgotten. Federally, municipalities have benefited from a GST rebate, the sharing of the federal gas tax and the Building Canada Fund as well as Stimulus Funding. Provincially, municipalities have benefited from the sharing of provincial income tax, the Building Manitoba Fund, and supports in several other areas. We also appreciate the Province stepping up with their one-third share of recent federal programs. The message the AMM is hoping to convey is not that either order of government has completely forgotten about municipalities, but rather that despite these efforts municipalities still face enormous challenges and more is needed.

Municipalities must have access to new revenue sources. A greater reliance on property taxes and provincial and federal grants has created an ever-widening chasm between municipal revenues and needs, leaving future generations with what is quickly

⁷ Slack, Kitchen, McMillan, Vaillancourt, "Roles, Responsibilities, Resources and Relationships – Report to the Provincial and Territorial Municipal Associations" June 15th, 2007.

becoming an insurmountable infrastructure deficit. Municipalities are struggling to deliver core services as their budgets begin to crack under increased demands. A new approach is needed, and for this reason we are asking the Province of Manitoba to collect a one cent municipal tax to be allocated to municipalities for infrastructure and split equally among municipalities on a per capita basis. This will provide municipalities with in excess of \$200 million a year. For a community of 1,000 people, this means roughly an investment of \$185,000 in their local infrastructure, or \$370,000 for a community of 2,000 people. A community such as Thompson could see close to \$2.5 million, while Winnipeg would expect to see over \$117 million. Although this funding alone will not erase the infrastructure deficit in Manitoba, it is a positive first step.

While the AMM is not necessarily asking for a new tax, there is support among Manitobans for a new tax dedicated to municipal infrastructure. Polling done by AMM in 2008 found that 94 percent of Manitobans see infrastructure as a high priority, including a 94 percent positive response rate in Winnipeg. The poll also found that 55 percent of Manitobans think that municipalities do not have the revenue sources needed to cover infrastructure costs alone, including 50 percent in Winnipeg. Most interestingly, the poll found that 54 percent of Manitobans, including 51 percent of Winnipeggers, support an additional one percent municipal tax dedicated to infrastructure renewal projects⁸. As the infrastructure deficit continues to grow, support for this will only increase.

The AMM is also asking for other revenues sources for municipalities, such as a rebate of the Provincial Sales Tax as well as increases to existing sources such as VLT revenues. We would also ask that any new mandates for municipalities be accompanied with corresponding financial support.

The sad reality is that while the Province of Manitoba has been leaders in some municipal areas, it has not been enough. We have the opportunity to visit every municipality in Manitoba within the four year election cycle and it is clear our communities are struggling and we are falling behind.

⁸ Probe Research "Public Attitudes on Infrastructure Renewal Funding in Manitoba" September, 2008.

We understand that providing additional revenues to municipalities may become more difficult as the economy continues to fluctuate. While economic projections can never be taken as absolute fact, they are often a prophetic divining rod on economic times. However what should not be lost is the positive impact infrastructure investment would have for the provincial and national economy. Furthermore, delaying investment in these critical infrastructure projects will have serious long-term consequences for Manitoba's economy.

Municipalities are not looking for new revenue sources to store money away for a rainy day. The storm has arrived. With a national municipal infrastructure deficit in excess of \$123 billion, and Manitoba's share in excess of \$11 billion, there is no shortage of work to be done. If municipalities are left to deal with this ballooning deficit alone armed only with property taxes and grants, it will continue to grow exponentially. Alternatively, providing municipalities with new revenue sources will not only begin to address this growing deficit, but will help build and strengthen our economy.

The time has come for a new approach to municipal funding. The expectations of today's municipalities are greater than any time in history. Regrettably so are the financial challenges facing municipalities. For municipal government to be sustainable into the future, and for Manitobans to have access to the quality of life they deserve, municipalities need to have access to sustainable growth revenues. This is the only way municipalities will be able to even begin to address the core challenges they face.

Therefore the AMM would like to see:

- 1. A greater investment in municipal infrastructure by all levels of government**
- 2. An end to the downloading of responsibilities to municipalities and a requirement that new mandates come with new funding**
- 3. A commitment to provide new alternate revenues to municipalities**

Appendix A – Active Resolutions

AMM Resolution Number 18 - 2009

Topic: Daycare Funding

Sponsor: Town of Morden (Central District)

Department: Manitoba Family Services and Consumer Affairs

WHEREAS the existing daycare funding and programming provided by the Province of Manitoba is no longer adequate, especially in communities where growth does not allow the use of inexpensive facilities such as closed schools for daycare use;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to meet with stakeholders to determine the needs for adequate daycare, and then initiate the programs necessary to ensure those needs are met.

AMM Resolution Number 18 - 2007

Topic: Survey Monument Restoration Costs

Sponsor: RM of Rhineland (Central District); RM of Winchester (Western District)

Department: Manitoba Justice

WHEREAS municipalities are responsible for survey monuments and costs of replacement of additional legal markers;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has a monument restoration program regarding 50 per cent cost reimbursement of monuments through municipalities;

AND WHEREAS additional markers or replacement of monuments are presently only 50 per cent recoverable resulting in a considerable burden on local taxpayers;

AND WHEREAS these costs should be the responsibility of the individual or individuals requesting surveying as a cost of business;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to make the cost of monument restoration and additional legal markers the burden and responsibility of the individual or individuals requesting the surveying;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that costs incurred by the individual or individuals can be applied for using existing municipal administration to collect and refund the current percentage as per the program guidelines, therefore not changing the integrity of the current provincial program.

AMM Resolution Number 16 - 2007

Topic: Rural Childcare Services

Sponsor: Village of St. Pierre-Jolys (Eastern District); RM of Rossburn (Interlake District)

Department: Manitoba Justice

WHEREAS childcare is an essential element of rural infrastructure, helping rural families to combine work and family, enabling parents to earn off-farm income, and thus strengthening the rural economy;

AND WHEREAS childcare services promote farm safety, and can mitigate out migration and population decline;

AND WHEREAS childcare services have significant local economic impacts in the short-term, as every \$1 spent on childcare generates \$1.58 of economic benefits through ripple effects; childcare services create employment for early childhood educators; and the spending from every 2 childcare jobs supports another full-time job, in addition to enabling parents labour force participation;

AND WHEREAS high quality childcare services also generate significant economic effects in the long-term, by promoting children's development, school-readiness, and helping children who are disadvantaged by poverty;

AND WHEREAS over half of mothers in rural areas are in the paid labour force, and face barriers to paid employment when childcare services are absent;

AND WHEREAS licensed childcare services exist for just 14 per cent of Manitoba children aged 0-12, parent fees are high and subsidies are restrictive, and trained early childhood educators are scarce, due to low wages and benefits;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to provide more capital and operating grants for smaller rural operations to establish local childcare services and through encouraging the provincial government to provide incentives to increase the pool of trained early childhood educators in rural areas.

AMM Resolution Number 51 - 2009

Topic: Review of Public Utilities Board Mandate

Sponsor: RM of Hanover (Eastern District)

Department: Manitoba Justice

WHEREAS the Public Utilities Board (PUB) sent two letters to municipalities in September 2008; one requiring all utility bylaws be amended to restrict utility shut offs and the other establishing an annual board fee of \$100 for all municipally owned utilities;

AND WHEREAS these changes do not take into consideration municipal efforts through bylaws and agreement to add unpaid utility charges to property taxes rather than shutting off utility services;

AND WHEREAS the PUB does not have authority over large parts of the rate structure including industrial service agreements;

AND WHEREAS municipalities are concerned with paying a \$100 annual board fee when often no services are delivered by the PUB during that year;

AND WHEREAS The Municipal Act provides municipalities with more responsibility to deal with local matters and maintain balanced budgets for their operations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to change the mandate of the Public Utility Board from a regulatory body to an advisory service to ensure the fair treatment to residents (not industries) in a community.

AMM Resolution Number 73 - 2008

Topic: Public Utilities Board

Sponsor: RM of Whitemouth; Town of Virden

Department: Manitoba Justice

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Public Utilities Board to rescind Order No. 127/08 and return local control to municipalities for collection procedures of utility accounts.

AMM Resolution Number 72 - 2008

Topic: Public Utilities Board Rates

Sponsor: Town of Altona (Central District)

Department: Manitoba Justice; Justice Canada

WHEREAS the Public Utilities Board (PUB) of Manitoba regulates retail water and sewer rates in all municipal jurisdictions except the City of Winnipeg, and now proposes to regulate the rates of wholesale suppliers and cooperatives in order to provide for public input/discussion of these rates;

AND WHEREAS under The Municipal Act municipalities are required to provide public budget consultations, including utilities budgets annually, and our ratepayers/customers can now formally question those who set the rates on an annual basis and have access to their elected officials less formally on an ongoing basis;

AND WHEREAS the Office of Drinking Water, by authority of The Drinking Water Safety Act, is now requiring annual reports for every public water supplier which will be advertised and made available to the public and posted on the internet;

AND WHEREAS the PUB's interventions are costly in dollars and time and now duplicate what other regulations require and are no longer providing a service that municipal governments do not already provide to the public;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to give all municipal entities the same water and sewer rate exemption by statute that the City of Winnipeg already enjoys;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT until that can be enacted municipalities be given regulatory forbearance which the PUB can exercise.