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News Release

‘Ballot Box Barriers’ identified

Report aims to attract more women to municipal politics

June 9, 2010 - The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) Task Force on Women in Municipal Government today released *Ballot Box Barriers: An action plan for engaging more women in the municipal democratic process*.

The report stems from a resolution at the 2009 AMM Annual Convention calling for the AMM to strike a steering committee to identify barriers to women’s participation in municipal government, and to make recommendations on how more women could become engaged in municipal decision-making.

Women in Municipal Government Task Force members Mayor Shirley Kalyniuk (Chair), Reeve Alice Bourgoin, and Councillor Russ Wyatt have done just that.

“We didn’t prepare this report to critique past or present municipal government, or as an attempt to replace any elected municipal official,” explains Chair Kalyniuk. “What we did is explore how to get more people interested in municipal government by identifying barriers and offering solutions.”

Ballot Box Barriers also lays out an action plan for the future, with the 2014 municipal election as the focus of this plan. This 4-year plan aims to not only attract more women to municipal government, but provides support to existing elected officials, both women and men, who are interested in this issue.

“With women representing 50 per cent of the population, many municipal councils simply do not reflect the whole of our communities,” states Kalyniuk. “This report will help communities identify steps they can take to attract more women to the process and make their councils more inclusive. The end result, we hope, will be something every Manitoba municipality should strive for—stronger councils and better communities.”

Ballot Box Barriers is available on the AMM website at http://www.amm.mb.ca/res_women.html. -30-