

News Release

Election coming, women needed: AMM

New committee will identify barriers to womens' participation in municipal government

January 21, 2010 – The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) recently appointed a committee to identify barriers to womens' participation in municipal government. The committee was struck in response to a resolution carried at the organization's recent annual convention, according to AMM President Doug Dobrowolski.

The resolution further asks the committee to make recommendations on how more women could be engaged in municipal politics. The committee plans to complete its work and present a report on its findings in time for its annual round of District Meetings in June. "With a municipal election on the horizon, this is a very timely issue and we are eager to share our findings with our members well in advance of October 27, which is Election Day in Manitoba," Dobrowolski explains.

The committee includes the following AMM board members:

- Shirley Kalyniuk, Chair – Kalyniuk is the AMM Urban Vice-President and the Mayor of the Town of Rosserburn. She was first elected to council in 1983.
- Alice Bourgouin – Bourgouin is the AMM Interlake Rural Director and has served as Reeve of the RM of Rosser since 2002.
- Russ Wyatt – Wyatt is the AMM City of Winnipeg Director and has represented the Transcona Ward for the City of Winnipeg since 2002.

Dobrowolski notes the committee's work will build on research already existing on the topic across Canada, where currently only 23 per cent of municipal councils are made up of women. "The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has done a great deal of work on this issue already," says Dobrowolski. The FCM's goal is an increase to 30 per cent by 2026, a figure the United Nations has defined as the minimal percentage of women required for government to reflect women's concerns. "Here in Manitoba the percentage of women on council is even lower at 17 per cent," says Dobrowolski. "The work of this committee will hopefully move this issue forward and play a part in raising that number."