



Contact:
Lynne Bereza, AMM Communications Coordinator
Telephone: (204) 856-2366
Cell: (204) 871-0517
Fax: (204) 856-2370
Email: bereza@amm.mb.ca
1910 Saskatchewan Avenue W.
Portage la Prairie, MB R1N 0P1

News Release

Progress made, but a long way to go

January 28, 2011 – Today marks the anniversary of the passing of the Bill for Enfranchisement of Women in the Manitoba Legislature, making Manitoba the first province to give women the right to vote and run for office.

However, 95 years later, the number of women engaged in politics at the municipal level remains discouragingly low.

The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) has tabulated the results of the 2010 municipal election, and while overall the number of women elected is higher than the 2006 election, women still only make up 14 per cent of municipal elected officials.

In 2006, voters elected 14 women as mayors or reeves, meaning 7 per cent of councils were headed by women. That number has decreased in 2010, with only 6 per cent of councils currently headed by women.

However, more women were elected as councillors in 2010 – 154 as opposed to 143 in 2006 – resulting in an increase to the overall numbers from 13 per cent to 14 per cent.

Last June, the AMM released the report *“Ballot Box Barriers: An action plan for engaging more women in the municipal democratic process”*. The report identified barriers to engaging women in the political process, and offered solutions to promote womens’ involvement. It also lays out an action plan to try to increase those numbers in the 2014 municipal election. The action plan includes holding workshops and using social media tools to connect women with mentors already involved in municipal politics.

AMM President Doug Dobrowolski says there is a window of opportunity leading up to the next municipal election. “The AMM will be strongly promoting this issue over the next four years,” he says. “I am hopeful our work will help to reverse this trend.”