

News Release

AMM resolutions focus on fairness for municipalities

November 17, 2015 - The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) 16th Annual Convention takes place from November 23-25 at the Keystone Centre in Brandon. Over 800 registered delegates will vote on resolutions which will form the AMM's lobbying direction for the coming year.

The 44 resolutions up for debate this year span a wide variety of hot-button issues, according to President Chris Goertzen. However, the need for municipal dollars to be returned to the hands of municipalities is a resonating theme, beginning with resolution #1 which calls for a rebate of the Provincial Sales Tax (PST) municipalities pay each year. Goertzen explains: "Municipalities pay over \$25 million each year in PST, and we think that should be rebated to municipalities, just like the federal government does with the GST. This money could go directly to municipal infrastructure where it is needed the most."

Resolution #2 calls on the province to pick up the costs incurred by amalgamated municipalities. "The amalgamation of 107 municipalities down to 47 created extensive costs for our members, even though it was a directive of the provincial government," explains Goertzen. "The resolution rightfully calls for some of those costs to be covered."

Several resolutions are taxation focused, while a number of them focus on fairness for municipalities, including "Manitoba Hydro Rate Billing" (#26), "Water and Wastewater Fund" (#28), and "Recreation Opportunities Grants" (#32). This doesn't surprise Goertzen: "Municipalities receive only eight cents out of every tax dollar, and they are expected to not only provide the services their citizens expect, but also deal with increasing costs and unfunded mandates from the provincial government. It simply isn't sustainable," he says.

Three resolutions sessions are scheduled to take place:

Tuesday, November 24 – 9:30 am, 11:30 am, and 4:00 pm

Wednesday, November 25 - 2:45 pm (if necessary)

All media are welcome to attend. A complete agenda and list of resolutions is available on the AMM website at: www.amm.mb.ca/events/event/amm2015/