



ASSOCIATION OF
MANITOBA
MUNICIPALITIES

**Meeting with the Honourable Ralph Eichler
Minister of Agriculture**

2018

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Introduction

- The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Ralph Eichler and representatives of Manitoba Agriculture.
- The AMM encourages the Province of Manitoba to consider municipal concerns as well as the effects of funding decisions on local communities throughout the budget process.
- This document outlines the AMM's position and recommendations on a number of important municipal issues relevant to the Agriculture portfolio.

Priority Issues

1) Hog Barn Expansion

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ ***Continue to consult with the AMM regarding the provincial government's plans to support Manitoba's pork industry; and***
- ❖ ***Develop resource materials tailored to municipalities regarding the hog barn approval process.***

- Manitoba's pork industry plays a significant role in creating jobs and economic opportunities across the province.
- In fact, Manitoba's pork industry contributes over \$1.7 billion to the provincial economy annually, while over 13,000 Manitobans rely on the pork industry for jobs.
- Companies such as HyLife and Maple Leaf have also welcomed a significant number of newcomers into the workforce, which has helped encourage successful settlement and economic growth in many communities throughout Manitoba.
- As the Minister of Agriculture has publicly voiced support for expanding Manitoba's pork industry, the AMM urges the Province of Manitoba to continue to consult with our organization regarding the provincial government's plans to support the industry.
- Reducing red tape while respecting municipal authority and sharing best practices to promote greater understanding among stakeholders would be very beneficial, as local communities deal with development or expansion plans.
- Therefore, the AMM calls on Manitoba Agriculture to develop resource materials, including factsheets, tailored to municipalities regarding the hog ban approval process.

2) Support for ALUS/GROW

The AMM recommends the government:

❖ ***Continue to consult with the AMM when implementing GROW based on the Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) model to help reduce flooding and improve water management.***

- As water management affects all municipalities, AMM members overwhelmingly support improvements to water quality in Manitoba's lakes and waterways.
- Ecological goods and services initiatives such as ALUS not only help to improve water quality, they also provide other environmental benefits such as wetland and riparian area protection.
- ALUS is an incentive-based model that recognizes the role of farmers in environmental management, and it has proven very successful in Nova Scotia, where it is a provincial policy, as well as in Ontario and Alberta.
- The AMM welcomes the introduction of Bill 7: *The Sustainable Watersheds Act*, which provides the framework for delivering the *Growing Outcomes in Watersheds* (GROW) program based on the ALUS model.
- The AMM also appreciates being a member of the Drainage Regulation Steering Committee, which includes representatives from various provincial government departments.
- In Manitoba, however, effective watershed management and retention of wetland benefits demand financial support and incentives from the Province of Manitoba so that any new processes can be properly implemented and fully observed in practice.
- Regulations should not be implemented without accompanying provincial funding, while reporting requirements should be streamlined as much as possible to reduce red tape.
- Therefore, the AMM urges the Province of Manitoba to continue to consult with our organization throughout the development of Manitoba's new watershed-based policy framework.

3) Funding for Veterinary Services

The AMM recommends the government:

❖ ***Review the funding of rural veterinary boards with consideration of rising operating and capital costs.***

- During the Rural Veterinary Task Force's consultations, the AMM appealed for an increase in operating grants for Veterinary Service Districts (VSD), the reinstatement of provincial infrastructure grants to veterinary clinics, and the re-evaluation of the funding formula for rural veterinary boards.
- As VSDs were created for the purpose of attracting veterinarians to rural Manitoba, the AMM hopes the Task Force's recommendations will address this relatively stagnant level of funding as it is vital for attracting and retaining veterinarians in local communities.
- Moreover, the discontinuation of Veterinary Technical Enhancement Grants in 2012 has exacerbated these trends.
- Therefore, it is essential that the provincial government does not download any additional responsibilities or financial costs onto VSDs and municipalities.
- The VSD funding formula should be reviewed as 20 out of 27 VSDs meet or exceed the \$19,000 maximum threshold for matching provincial funding on municipal contributions. Some clinics regularly incur costs of upwards of \$45,000 on an annual basis.
- The AMM hopes its recommendations will help leverage additional funding to support veterinary services throughout Manitoba.

4) Farmland Beaver Damage Control Program

The AMM recommends the government:

❖ ***Ensure funding will continue to be provided to municipalities to manage nuisance beavers.***

- The potential damage to local infrastructure and associated repair costs due to beaver activity as well as the potential risks of changes in water flow are well understood by municipalities and the Province of Manitoba.
- On an annual basis, nuisance beaver management can cost a municipality tens of thousands of dollars while damages may create additional issues such as access for producers, school buses and emergency services.
- The *Farmland Beaver Damage Control Program* is currently funded under *Growing Forward 2*, however this joint federal-provincial initiative to advance the agriculture industry is set to expire in March 2018.
- As the new, five-year Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) will soon come into effect, the AMM urges the Province of Manitoba to ensure funding will continue to be provided to municipalities to manage nuisance beavers.
- It is essential that funding for beaver management be included in the Government of Canada-Province of Manitoba CAP bilateral agreement.

Appendix – AMM Active Resolutions

AMM Resolution #44-2015 *Standing Policy

Topic: Funding for Problem Beavers

Sponsor(s): Rossgburn Municipality (Midwestern District)

Department(s): Manitoba Agriculture

WHEREAS Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship is responsible for the control of deer, moose, bear, birds, fish, coyotes, wolves, etc. and was previously responsible for problem beavers, before downloading responsibility on municipalities and providing minimal compensation for beaver control;

AND WHEREAS the control of beaver activity places a substantial strain on a municipality's human and financial resources and can cause serious damages to infrastructure;

AND WHEREAS Manitoba Conservation in part manages beaver populations by requiring trapping licenses and permits;

AND WHEREAS ongoing costs associated with trapping beavers and removal of dams are beyond the resources of some municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to cost share 50/50 the expenses for removal of beaver dams and cleanout of blocked culverts on municipal property;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of Manitoba assumes all costs associated with the removal of problem beavers and dams on Crown Lands;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to take back responsibility for the control of problem beavers.

AMM Resolution #32-2013

Topic: Modernize Education Funding

Sponsor(s): RM of Edward (Western District)

Department(s): *Manitoba Education and Training, Manitoba Agriculture

WHEREAS farmers in rural Manitoba have lobbied and fought for fairness when it comes to the education tax system;

AND WHEREAS the 2013 Budget would see the rebate capped at \$5,000, which would unfairly discriminate against producers with a larger land base, causing greater hardship;

AND WHEREAS the current education tax system is clearly dysfunctional and antiquated, in need of restructuring so that the cost of education is funded fairly;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to repeal the \$5,000 cap on the Farmland School Tax Rebate immediately;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Province of Manitoba work to create a new, modernized model for how education funding is achieved.

AMM Resolution #39-2013 *Standing Policy

Topic: Infrastructure Grants for Veterinary Clinics

Sponsor(s): RM of Wallace (Western District)

Department(s): Manitoba Agriculture

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has ceased providing infrastructure grants to provincially funded veterinary clinics;

AND WHEREAS provincially funded veterinary clinics provide basic care to protect the health of food producing herds in rural Manitoba;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to continue to provide infrastructure grants to provincially funded veterinary clinics.

AMM Resolution #09-2011

Topic: Rural Veterinary Board Funding

Sponsor(s): RM of Coldwell (Interlake District)

Department(s): Manitoba Agriculture

WHEREAS funding from the Province of Manitoba for rural veterinary boards has remained the same since at least 1989;

AND WHEREAS the cost of living and the cost of providing these services has increased substantially;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to re-evaluate the funding formula for rural veterinary boards annually or bi-annually to better reflect the actual cost of delivering service.

AMM Resolution #12-2007

Topic: Increase to Operating Grants for Veterinary Services

Sponsor(s): RM of Ste. Rose (Parkland District)

Department(s): Manitoba Agriculture

WHEREAS Veterinary Service Districts in Manitoba may receive an operating grant of \$19,000 from the Province of Manitoba on a yearly basis;

AND WHEREAS the cost of maintaining a Veterinary District is ever increasing with municipal levies surpassing the provincial contribution;

AND WHEREAS the cost of operating veterinary clinics has increased significantly;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba for an increase in operating grants to Veterinary Service Districts in the amount equal to municipal levies