

How to write a resolution

By Lindsay Thomson, Senior Policy Analyst

Resolutions are extremely important for the AMM. They determine what the priority issues are for our members. They are the basis of the AMM's lobbying activities and policies. And they provide our membership the opportunity to have a voice by introducing a resolution themselves or voting on these resolutions at District Meetings in June and at the Annual Convention in November.

Writing a resolution does not need to be a difficult task, but a clear resolution is more effective than one that is difficult to understand. Here are a few tips to help you write a clear and concise resolution.

Tip #1: Remember the categories when drafting your resolution:

1 – Municipal Issues

- Resolutions whose outcome has the potential to impact all or a majority of municipalities, either immediately or at some point in the future.
- The impact can be direct or indirect.
- Examples of areas of influence of Category 1 resolutions include direct changes to legislation that govern municipalities, such as The Municipal Act, changes to direct funding to municipalities, such as the Provincial-Municipal Tax Sharing Agreement, or more indirect changes to government programs that might impact municipalities, like a change in the Provincial drainage program.

2 – Local or Regional Municipal Issues

- Local or regional issues affect one region or a small number of municipal governments.
- Resolutions in this category are presented at District Meetings; however they are not presented at the Annual Convention.
- A resolution in this category, if passed at the District Meeting, will be dealt with by the Board of Directors as they see fit.

3 – Non-Municipal Issues

- Non-municipal issues do not affect municipal governments.
- Resolutions in this category are not presented at District Meetings or the Annual Convention. These resolutions are dealt with by the Board of Directors as they see fit.

Tip #2: Think about what the problem is.

Identifying the problem you want addressed makes it easier to identify what you would like the AMM to lobby for. A resolution has two components; the beginning starts with WHEREAS, and it provides a small amount of background. This is where the issue or problem is briefly stated. Ideally, there should not be more than two or three clauses.

Tip #3: Think about what you want the AMM to do to address the problem.

All AMM resolutions have a second component which states what the members would like the AMM to lobby for, beginning with THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED.

Because the 'be it resolved' clause is ultimately what the AMM membership votes on, it should clearly convey exactly what the desired result is on its own. In other words, one should be able to understand what the AMM will lobby for without having to read the WHEREAS clause.

Tip #3: Include background separate from your resolution if needed.

If your resolution relates to an issue that is particularly complicated, please include up to a page of background information to assist AMM staff in the preparation of a lobbying strategy if the resolution is carried at Convention. As well, please verify that any information you include in your resolution is correct. Include the source of the information in your background if you can.

Council must pass the resolution and submit it to the AMM before the deadline at the beginning of June. AMM staff compiles all resolutions by district, to be categorized and voted on at each June District Meeting. If your 'be it resolved' clause or clauses are similar enough to those of another resolution in your district, AMM staff may approach both sponsors to combine the resolutions.

And please...remember to submit your resolutions before the deadline! Late resolutions are not usually accepted unless the issue was too recent to have a resolution ready in time.

Every resolution is categorized at June District meetings by the Resolutions Committee. This committee consists of a Chair and two other members who are nominated from among the elected officials attending the meeting. The Chair of the Resolutions Committee in each district not only chairs the resolutions session at their district meeting, he/she also comes to meetings in September and at Convention to review all resolutions.

What happens in September?

All resolution carried at the June District Meetings are revised by AMM staff and the Resolutions Committee in September. Defeated or withdrawn resolutions do not go any further after the district meeting.

At the September meeting of the Resolutions Committee, every category 1 resolution carried at a June District Meeting is reviewed. The Committee verifies all resolutions for errors and clarity, and confirms that all resolutions belong to category 1. Only category 1 resolutions go to the AMM Annual Convention to be debated. As well, if any new resolutions are similar to existing ones, the Committee can designate a new resolution as Standing Policy.

Hopefully these tips will help any municipalities with issues they would like to draw attention to through the resolution process. Happy writing!

Did you know...

All active resolutions are available for viewing on the AMM's online searchable database at www.amm.mb.ca/pol_active.cfm? If you are unsure how to prepare your resolution, this is a great place to start!

The logo for the Association of Municipalities of Manitoba (AMM) is a large, light gray graphic. It features a stylized silhouette of a city skyline with several buildings of varying heights and a large evergreen tree on the left side. Below the skyline, the letters "AMM" are written in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font. The entire graphic is set against a light gray background.

AMM