

From: [NSFM Communications](#)
To: [NSFM Info](#)
Cc: [Juanita Spencer](#)
Subject: An Open Letter from the Service Exchange Renegotiation and Municipal Government Act Review (SERMGAR) Committee
Date: April 21, 2022 3:25:41 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[NSFM SERMGAR Announcement 19 April 2022.pdf](#)

Please see an open letter from the Service Exchange Renegotiation and Municipal Government Act Review (SERMGAR) Committee below, you may also view it as the attached PDF.

April 19, 2022

Background

Since their creation, municipalities have been situated on the frontline of public service. Today, providing a broad range of services to communities has become more complex than ever and it's important to ensure that Nova Scotian municipalities are equipped to play their part in a responsive and financially sustainable way. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has been mandated to renegotiate the current Service Exchange Agreement with municipalities and to review the Municipal Government Act (MGA). This represents an exciting opportunity to address long-standing issues and to support local governments in confronting modern-day challenges.

Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities' Response

In response, the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) Board of Directors struck a committee of municipal leaders to engage with the province through this process. The committee members are as follows:

- Mayor Murray Scott, Cumberland County
- Mayor Carolyn Bolivar-Getson, Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
- Mayor Darlene Norman, Region of Queens Municipality
- Mayor Laurie Boucher, Town of Antigonish
- Warden Bruce Morrison, Victoria County
- Mayor Don Clarke, Town of Berwick
- Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Jacques Dube, Halifax Regional Municipality
- CAO Marie Walsh, Cape Breton Regional Municipality
- CAO Erin Beaudin, Town of Wolfville
- CAO Dan McDougall, District of Chester.

The Service Exchange Renegotiation and Municipal Government Act Review (SERMGAR) Committee represents a cross section of Nova Scotia communities, and its members bring diverse skills and insights. SERMGAR will be supported by staff from NSFM and the Associations of Municipal Administrators, Nova Scotia.

Work Underway

The Committee met with the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing (DMAH) for the

first time on March 10, 2022. DMAH acknowledges that the current renegotiation and review should build upon principles of fiscal sustainability and an equitable division of responsibilities between municipalities and the province.

Next Steps

SERMGAR will engage with NSFM members to hear their input on the current municipal/provincial landscape. Using these insights, and a variety of other tools and resources, the committee will advise the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing in a collaborative and forward-thinking fashion. The negotiations and review are expected to take approximately two years to complete, and the committee will be providing regular progress reports to NSFM members.

NOVA SCOTIA FEDERATION OF MUNICIPALITIES

nsfm.ca | [facebook](#) | [twitter](#) | [linkedin](#) | [instagram](#)



NOVA SCOTIA FEDERATION
OF MUNICIPALITIES

NSFM is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw. We are all Treaty people. We also acknowledge the histories, contributions, and legacies of the African Nova Scotian people and communities who have been here for over 400 years.