

AMANS Activities Report (February to April 2026)

AMANS Board of Directors

- AMANS Board of Directors meeting on Friday, April 17. Received delegations from LinkNS, Nova Scotia Power, and Don Smeltzer, management consultant and Past AMANS President.
- Link Nova Scotia provided an overview of Bill 24, Amendments to the Joint Regional Transportation Agency Act that was passed in March 2025 and related Regulations that came forward this January. They provided updates on the approval of the Transportation Corridor Control Act (passed in September 2025) and some of the key projects that are currently underway.
- Nova Scotia power gave a presentation on Collaboration with Municipalities, which provided an overview of NSP's reliability program and key accounts services. They highlighted how those initiatives support municipal growth and development and explore opportunities to strengthen collaboration on services that deliver long-term economic value for Nova Scotians.
- Don presented on an AI-Powered Municipal Ethics and Governance Tool that he is currently promoting to municipal governments across the country. For a fee, municipal units can have the AI tool provide guidance on ethical dilemmas as well as evaluate municipal policies, by-laws and documents related to ethics and governance.

AMANS Activities

Education

- Continues to be active. Recent offerings since February include:
 - Principles of Procurement 101;
 - Leadership & Problem-Solving Workshop;
 - Rules of Order & Meeting Processes; and,
 - Harm Reduction & De-Escalation Training.
- Upcoming session on Understanding the Fundamentals of Municipal Records Management (a 101 on Records Management for all municipal staff) in mid-May.
- AMANS continues to review and modernize our existing foundational modules.
- Expect to have revitalized Financial Management Modules completed this spring and ready to deliver shortly after.

Municipal Website Venture Program

- Currently undertaking a full program review of the MWW.
- ATN Strategies/Aptitude Digital engaged to jointly review the program.
- Expecting a final draft by the end of the month.
- Consultants will be presenting findings to the AMANS Board in May.

Municipal Accessibility, Equity, and Anti-Racism Program

- New Municipal Accessibility, Equity, and Anti-Racism Program staff have had a busy end of March with numerous municipalities submitting grant applications towards EDIA initiatives.
- Continue to be busy working on planning an upcoming lunch and learn series of speakers.

- The Equity, Anti-Racism, and Accessibility Advisory Committee has started a new two-year term – main oversight will be to support the implementation of plans. Committee membership is a combination of returning and new members.
- Lots of ongoing support for compliant and non-compliant municipalities throughout the province.

Wellness Program

- Wellness Program has been very active with members and staff have received positive feedback from those engaged.
- With March being recognized as Nutrition Month, on March 26 AMANS launched a four-part nutrition focused webinar series. This series had a total of 45 registered. The series wrapped up on April 16.
- AMANS staff also delivered a wellness session on Ergonomics in Action: Safer Office and Home Workspaces.
- Next month is Mental Health Awareness Month in Canada. AMANS has secured Celina Caesar-Chavannes to host a 4-part mental health series starting on April 29.
- This series focuses on mental health in municipal leadership and already has over 60 people registered.
- An information session has also been scheduled with Kerri Farrell from Telus Health to walk members through using the Telus Health One app for mental health resources and tools.
- All of these sessions are free and available to both municipal staff and elected officials.
- Wellness Grant applications are now closed for the 2026-2027 year. AMANS received applications from 20 municipalities. The wellness team recently met with NSFM and Hub to complete the grant approvals. An announcement will be distributed on successful applications from AMANS.

Marketing Levy Project

- AMANS has a signed letter of offer with Carolyn Penny to undertake the Marketing Levy Project work.
- Primary purpose of the Marketing Levy Project is to explore and analyze options for collection and disbursement of marketing levy fees across municipal units – both municipalities and the short term accommodation providers have voiced preference for a centralized body to do this work
- Carolyn worked as a Manager in HRM’s Finance Department. She was part of the implementation of HRM’s system that collects and disburses marketing levy fees from short term accommodation providers.
- Carolyn is wrapping up some contract work with HRM at the end of June and will begin working on the project as of July 2.

2026 AMANS Spring Conference

- Registration for the 2026 Spring AMANS Conference is now live on the AMANS website.
- It will be held at the Digby Pines from June 10 to 12.
- Offering a variety of pre-Conference education sessions on:

- Rules of Order and Meeting Processes
- Harm Reduction and De-escalation training
- Understanding the Fundamentals of Municipal Records Management
- Municipal Finance Officer session
- Opening keynote is Dr. Ashley Margeson speaking on Avoiding Burnout in Municipal Workplaces and closing keynote from Kelly Mitchell, a resilience speaker, on One Toolbox Leadership – she will speak to building leadership through communication, boundaries, consistency, and resilience.
- Variety of concurrent sessions on:
 - Leading Difficult Conversations in the Municipal Workplace
 - Cybersecurity Risks and Response Readiness
 - Managing Drought Impacts
 - Accessibility Planning
 - Recruitment, Retention, and Workplace Pressures in Municipal Government

Other Activities

- Working with NSFM and PVSC to develop a model policy to address new provisions in the MGA under section 69B – policy for reduction of taxes for rebuilt property after a natural disaster – very complex to sort out with assessment values
- 2026 Municipal Salary survey – to be distributed at the end of April
- Undertaking a Membership survey – understand better what we’re doing right, what needs improvement, etc. chance to bounce some ideas off the membership as well as non-members and get good idea of what their needs are
- Communities of Practice – looking to create spaces for municipal staff in records management, communications, procurement, FOI to connect with their peers, network, ask questions, and help generate ideas for events, education sessions, conference sessions, etc.