

Report to NSFM Board – Activities of AMANS (November 2025 to January 2026)

AMANS Operations – New staff hires

- Jeff Sunderland as new AMANS Executive Director
- Janice Taylor as part-time bookkeeper
- Ivan Okello and August MacLean as Municipal Accessibility, Equity, and Anti-Racism Program Coordinators

Education and Professional Development

- Education sessions are being rolled out fast and furious. Recent sessions on:
 - Fourth Edition of the AMANS Records Management Manual
 - Leadership and Problem Solving
 - Demystifying AI
- Upcoming sessions on:
 - Turning Down the Heat: Managing Online Anger and Municipal Best Practices scheduled on Feb 11 – open to both elected officials and staff – follow up from a popular session hosted by Rebrick Communications in late October – glad to have them back to offer this again
 - Principles of Procurement 101 on Feb 26
 - Sessions on Financial Management 1 and 2 – finalizing updated modules of these sessions, glad to be able to offer them again
- Partnership with Dalhousie University – working on developing a CAO Leadership program with education modules and CAO facilitators to help build capacity for aspiring or new CAOs – DMA is excited about this initiative, hope to have something ready this fall
- With our updated financial management modules, Dal has recognized these as equivalent courses that members can take towards the Dal Local Government Finance Certificate
- Hosting a planning session on February 10 with the Education Committee – will review business model for the delivery of AMANS education sessions

2026 AMANS Conferences

- Conference Planning Committees have been formed – beginning to craft the agenda for the programs for those events
- Spring Conference is at the Digby Pines (June 10 to 12)
- Fall Conference and AGM is at the Delta Dartmouth (October 13 to 16)

AMANS Sponsorship and Partnership Program

- Modernization of event and conference experience – provide sponsors with more opportunities to engage with AMANS throughout the year
- Board approved the sponsorship program at its January meeting and is being rolled out

Ongoing Policy Work to Support Municipal Administration

- Fire services Review continues to be a key priority. Engaging on the DEM CAO Advisory Table, participated at the Emergency Resiliency Forum January 28 to 29 – fire services matters was a full day topic for discussion on the Thursday of the event
- Ongoing engagement with DEM. AMANS President and ED have quarterly meetings with the DM and ADM. Lafleche and Pottie Bunge have been invited to attend the Feb Board meeting in person
- Ongoing engagement with Service Nova Scotia and Department of Justice on the new FOIPOP Act
- Department of Public Works joined the December Board meeting to discuss municipal implications under Bill 130 the new Traffic Safety Act
- Very interested in working with the Province on ways of modernizing municipal administration and assisting them with uncovering potential efficiencies within municipal government – those conversations are ongoing with our check-ins with DM Lafleche and ADM Pottie Bunge

Municipal Equity, Anti-Racism and Accessibility Program

- Back up and running after brief pause this past summer/early fall
- New Program Coordinators picking up the work and engaging very well with staff at the Office of Equity and Anti-Racism and the Accessibility Directorate
- Engaging with the 20+ municipal units and villages that are still working on their plans
- Hosting lunch and learns – first one for 2026 on February 19 on understanding ableism
- AMANS grants funding through the program to support implementation of plans – information session on that will be held on February 11
- Advisory Committee that supports the Program reconvened in early January – term ends at the end of March – second term of the Committee to oversee the next two year phase of the program will begin April 1

Municipal Website Venture Program Review

- Initiating a program review of the Municipal Website Venture – hasn't been done since the program's inception in 2007
- ATN/Aptitude conducting the review – Wayne Mason, former HRM Councillor, leading the review from ATN
- Full review of the program – bringing back recommendations on program delivery, if we offer the appropriate content management system for municipal needs, internal capacity and resourcing to deliver the program now and in the future – full scope of recommendations coming back to the AMANS Board for consideration by early spring

Municipal Wellness Program

- Continued delivery of the program is occurring per the report to NSFM Board – see October report

Marketing Levy Project

- Received grant from DMA to look at options to collect and remit marketing levy fees from short term rental companies – AirBNB, VRBO – thank you to NSFM for supporting our request for funding to DMA to do this work
- Job posting went out in November, reviewed submissions from candidates in early December
- Identified an ideal candidate who worked at HRM overseeing the implementation of HRM's system for collection of levies from the short term rental organizations – knows what needs to be done at the local level, has strong knowledge of municipal finance and the provincial regulations, existing relationships both with AirBNB/VRBO as well as the municipal and provincial staff working on this subject area – will be able to hit the ground running – start date will be in late June/early July to accommodate their current work situation, but we anticipate receiving a strong report in time for the AMANS Conference in the Fall – they will have an easier learning curve than it would be bringing in someone who may be new to this field

Audit Committee

- Reviewing and modernizing internal financial policies – investment and reserve

Membership Committee

- Reconstituted in November
- Reviewing our membership fee model, membership categories
- Support the implementation of a new member platform that members can use to access everything they need – register and pay for events, pay for membership, etc.

Procurement Committee

- Working on developing further training opportunities for municipal staff on procurement – Principles of Procurement 101 for all staff, Contract A/Contract B – Jane Pryor back as a Retired member and helping us with facilitating these sessions with support from the Committee

Records Committee

- Updated the Records Management Manual in 2025 – Fourth Edition – holding workshops on the updated manual
- Developing education session on Records 101 and electronic records management
- Looking at developing a community of practice of records managers and information and privacy officers to come together and share knowledge leading up to the implementation of the new FOIPOP act in April 2027

Other Items

- PVSC delegation came to the Board in December to talk to the roll out of the 2026 assessments
- Department of Opportunities and Social Development came to the Board in December to discuss the Remedy program (supports for people with disabilities) and ways that they can connect with municipal units on the program