

May 15, 2018

**TO: Mayors, Wardens, Clerks, All Units**

**FR: Geoff Stewart, President, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities**

**RE: UNSM BOARD REPORT, MAY10, 2018**

I am pleased to send you the highlights of NSFAM Board Report from our May 10, 2018, meeting. We ask that you include this report on your Council Agenda. We would be pleased to answer any questions that may arise or hear any comments and/or suggestions.

Also attached is the update on our initiatives report.

1. **Municipal Provincial Roundtable:** The Executive of NSFAM met with Ministers Mombourquette; Casey; Churchill; Furey; Hines; Glavine and Rankin on Wednesday, May 2, 2018. The group agreed to a revised Partnership Framework Agreement to direct joint work over the next several months. The agreement references four of the five resolutions passed at the UNSM November annual conference. Also added to the framework is Municipal Modernization, under which changes to the Municipal Government Act and Charter will be considered, along with economic development tools; regional planning and minimum planning standards; and a review of the municipal equalization and other provincial grants. Support for the implementation of the SHIFT goals will be provided through an MOU between the NSFAM and the Department of Seniors. Fire Services, asset management and the REN model remain in the Framework, as their work continues. Projects mostly completed under the previous Partnership Framework were removed: consultation guidelines, the Financial Condition Index and the Accountability and Transparency initiative.
2. **Federation Priorities:** While NSFAM continues to work on the resolutions and items in the Partnership Framework, it is important to look forward on emerging areas of priority. In the last 6 weeks, regional meetings and caucus meetings have been held to help identify possible priorities. As well, the Board asked all councils to reflect on their priorities and to provide feedback to the Federation on the priority issues. At this time the Board agreed to continue or begin work on the following topics:
  - Cannabis
  - Code of conduct
  - Housing
  - Immigration
  - Libraries
  - Policing
  - Roles and responsibilities
  - Solid Waste (EPR)
  - Surplus Schools
  - Sustainability (climate change, energy)

3. **Resolution to FCM On Federal Leadership on Active Transportation:** The NSFAM agreed to support a resolution to FCM and will speak to it at the FCM Conference. The NSFAM has an Active Transportation Committee and had written to the federal minister in support of a national strategy and dedicated funding. The resolution to FCM calls for the federal government to develop and implement a national active transportation policy that would: improve statistics on mode share; research on benefits of cycling and walking; develop policy and infrastructure design guidelines; coordinate amongst federal departments and agencies; and continue long-term federal investment in AT infrastructure.
4. **Mi'qmaq Meeting:** The Board agreed to invite Chief Wilburt Marshall to our June Board meeting to discuss resources to assist municipalities in considering Mi'qmaq heritage
5. **PVSC MOU:** The Board agreed to an MOU with the Property Valuation Services Corporation which spells out the commitments of both organizations, for example, with respect to the provision of services, governance, budget and funding, consultation and communications. This will be supported with individual agreements between PVSC and each municipality.

# NSFM Initiatives Report – May 10, 2018

**UNSM Vision:** *Effective local government and strong, sustainable communities*

**UNSM Mission:** *To enable effective local government for Nova Scotia's communities by facilitating strategic advocacy, education and collaboration*

## Initiatives

### 1. Partnership Framework

#### **Description/Update**

The Ministers Roundtable met on May 2, 2018. At that meeting, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and the President of NSFM signed a revised Partnership Framework Agreement that incorporates four of the five NSFM 2017 Resolutions. Both organizations agree to work together on the CAP issue, Roads, Internet, and a review of the DMA Operating and other grants for municipalities. In addition, the NS Health Authority is working with NSFM to address the recruitment of physicians.

A progress report of the 2016 Partnership Framework was also provided. Three projects were completed: the consultation guideline, the Accountability and Transparency work around expense claims, and the revision of the financial indicator index.

A proposed MOU on Age Friendly Communities was also discussed, as was the 12-month notice letter and cannabis.

### 2. Cannabis Legalization

#### **Description/Update**

The province has tabled two relevant pieces of legislation, one dealing with the sale of cannabis through the NS Liquor Stores, and one amending the Smoke Free Places Act to include the smoking of cannabis.

The NSFM/AMA Municipal Cannabis Working Group has been meeting to discuss the implications to NS municipalities. Municipalities will be able to enact further restrictions for public consumption through by laws. Concerns remain around public safety, enforcement and costs. There will be a presentation at the NSFM Spring Workshop with up-to-date implications and suggested actions.

NSFM has supported FCM financially in the development of a guide for municipalities, and this guide has been released and is available on the NSFM website. It deals with planning and other issues, but not directly with policing.

### **3. Fire Services Review**

#### **Description/Update**

The Board approved appointments to the NS Joint Municipal Fire Services Committee Phase I. Those appointed to represent NSFM are: Councillor Jennifer Daniels, District of West Hants, and Councillor Wayne Thorburne, Bridgewater. The Committee has met a few times, now, and is developing the workplan in response to the Pomax Study.

### **4. Accessibility Act**

#### **Description/Update**

Municipalities will need to implement the requirements under the new Act. A Joint Provincial/Municipal Committee has been formed to assist municipalities in fulfilling their requirements under the Act. The NSFM Board appointed Councillor Laurie Cranton, County of Inverness, Mayor Jeff Cantwell, Town of Wolfville, and Councillor George MacDonald, CBRM, to the committee. Work is underway to develop tools for municipalities in developing their advisory committees and action plans. For now, municipalities are encouraged to begin documenting their existing assets for accessibility. For those looking for guidance on standards, the Accessibility Directorate refers you to the Rick Hansen Foundation website.

### **5. Asset Management**

NSFM continues to support municipalities with asset management planning, as a requirement of the 2014-24 Gas Tax Fund Agreement. NSFM recently submitted its Progress Report for the funding it received from FCM from the [Municipal Asset Management Program](#) to provide basic training and skill development resources to Nova Scotia municipalities. The Progress Report was approved by FCM and it will disburse \$33,480.77 to NSFM for the work completed to date, which represent approximately 40% of the total funding. NSFM completed its 6 training courses at the later part of 2017 and is currently developing an online course for elected officials on the basics of asset management. The final initiative NSFM will produce with the NSFM funding is an online module based on the Province of Nova's asset management pilot project "how to" guide for collecting data and completing condition assessments for linear assets.

### **6. Upcoming Events**

- NS Planning Conference – May 16 – 18, 2018, Halifax

- [The Atlantic Active Transportation Summit](#) - May 23-24, 2018, Halifax Central Library, Halifax, NS
- [FCM Conference](#) - May 31 - June 3, 2018, Halifax Convention Centre, Halifax, NS--We encourage you to take advantage of the Halifax location and attend the Conference. It is a wonderful learning opportunity. also watch for an e-mail regarding the opportunity to showcase your community and successes to the over 3,000 delegates, companions and exhibitors expected to attend.
- AMANS Spring Conference – June 13 -15, 2018

