

June 11, 2018

TO: Mayors, Wardens, Clerks, All Units

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

RE: NSFM BOARD REPORT, JUNE 8, 2018

I am pleased to send you the highlights of NSFM Board Report from our June 8, 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. **M'ikmaq:** The Board heard a presentation from Dr. Heather MacLeod-Leslie and Chief Wilburt Marshall regarding the need to protect and preserve Mi'kmaq culture and heritage. A few suggestions were put forth as a start for better cooperation between NSFM and the M'ikmaq Chiefs. NSFM will work with the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs to identify next steps in building the relationship between municipalities and the Mi'kmaq.
2. **Elimination of One-Third Tax Exemption:** The Board approved sending a letter to every Council to help support a recommendation that compensation be appropriately adjusted. The Board also approved sending out a Press Release on the issue. These will be coming in the next few weeks, and Councils are urged to address this issue before the end of the year.
3. **Extended Producer Responsibility:** Following the presentation at the recent Spring Workshop, interest in supporting a request to the Province to introduce EPR is growing. The intent of this next phase is to start to reach out and meet members of the business community to garner their feedback. NSFM will be working with the Solid Waste Chairs and the Priority Group on this initiative.
4. **Infrastructure and Bi-Lateral Agreement with Nova Scotia:** The Nova Scotia Agreement requires the Province to consult with municipalities and develop a three-year plan. The Board was in agreement that NSFM needs a more formal role with the Department on the development of the three year plan, and will write to the province to find out when NSFM can meet with them to discuss the three-year plan.
5. **Overview of the Municipal Climate Change Plans:** The Department of Municipal Affairs provided an overview of the plans developed by municipalities to address climate change and the need for adaptation and mitigation. An overview of the presentation is attached. NSFM is working with partners to offer a workshop on climate change and the implications for municipalities to be delivered next fall or winter.
6. **Overview of the FCIs for all municipalities.** The Board received a presentation from staff on the results of the latest FCI reports and discussed the current and future situation facing many municipalities.

7. **CBRM Funding Request:** CBRM wrote NSFMR seeking support for a review of the province's operating grant. The Partnership Agreement already includes a review of the Equalization Program, but the Board noted it hadn't been changed for many years. The Board approved sending a letter to the Province requesting they begin a review of Equalization Funding as soon as possible and the review should consider the purpose of the grant; the criteria to be used in allocating the grant, the amount of dollars in the Fund, and the source of the Fund.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan Report Summary of Presentation to NSFM Board Meeting, 8 Jun 2018

Climate change is a pressing issue facing all Nova Scotian municipalities. Every municipality in Nova Scotia has produced a Municipal Climate Change Action Plan (MCCAP), and the Government of Nova Scotia's Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA) has completed a review of these plans. DMA staff presented the findings of their review at the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities Board meeting on June 8th, 2018.

Municipal units were congratulated for producing the MCCAPs as they are an excellent starting point in preparing for climate change. MCCAPs across the province identified flooding as the most prevalent problem resulting from climate change. The analysis of the 50+ MCCAPs found that municipalities were remarkably consistent in focusing on three primary topics: at-risk infrastructure, land use planning, and emergency management.

The MCCAPs identified roads and related structures as the primary infrastructure concern for most municipalities. Municipalities reported that climate change has put many roads and related structures—including culverts, bridges, and causeways—directly in the path of flooding and erosion. When flooding and erosion occur, municipalities are concerned they will face costly maintenance and repair bills, transport disruptions, and threats to public safety.

Municipalities also identified wastewater and stormwater systems as key infrastructure concerns. Extreme weather events can overwhelm the design capacity of collection and treatment facilities, which are often engineered to utilize low-lying topographies. Many municipalities also acknowledged that drinking water supplies were a major infrastructure concern, especially when floodwaters contaminate surface and groundwater supplies.

Land use planning was among the most commonly cited adaptation actions identified in the MCCAPs. Administrative control of land usage through flood-risk zoning and floodplain mapping offers municipalities the opportunity to keep new development away from areas at high risk of flooding and erosion. Strategic thinking in land use planning can have big payoffs in managing risk.

Finally, emergency management figured largely in Nova Scotian MCCAPs. Municipalities identified public safety as a top priority and recognized that vulnerable persons would require special attention in times of emergency. Levels of vulnerability are largely dependent on demographics and location.

Municipalities are encouraged to continue to evolve their plans, through discussions in their communities and with their neighbouring municipalities.

Board Initiatives Report – June 8, 2018

NSFM Vision: Effective local government and strong, sustainable communities

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

Initiatives

1. Partnership Framework

Description/Update

A number of meetings have taken place in May regarding Municipal Modernization, Fire Services, and Doctor Recruitment.

The Province released its Last Mile Strategy this past week and a teleconference was held for Mayors, Wardens and CAOs to brief them on the report. NSFM is working with the province to develop a workshop for our members in early October.

The NSFM Workshop on Doctor Recruitment is being held June 18th, at the Halifax Westin. The workshop will include presentations on how recruitment is currently being managed, how the Dalhousie School of Medicine would like to work with communities; what physicians look for in deciding where they will practice, and a few communities will share their experiences in recruiting doctors to their areas.

At the Ministers Roundtable a proposed MOU on Age Friendly Communities was discussed and agreed to. Once the MOU has been signed, it will be circulated to NSFM members.

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 Department of Justice presented an overview of the legislation at the NSFM Spring Workshop and their presentation is available on the NSFM website.

The UNSM/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. The Committee is considering model bylaws, and approaches to health and safety in the workplace.

UNSM has supported FCM financially in the development of a guide for municipalities, and a link to this guide is available on both the FCM and NSFAM websites. It deals with planning and other issues, but not directly with policing.

FCM has developed an outline of possible costs for municipalities, and this table is also available on the NSFAM website. Some of the costing areas may not be applicable to Nova Scotia as retail will be through the NSLC, not by private operators.

The Municipal Cannabis committee is meeting June 13 to continue its work. NSFAM is continuing its discussions with the Department of Justice.

3. Fire Services Review

Description/Update

The Committee established to review the Fire Services Study and to develop an action plan continues to meet and to identify priority areas for action. The next meeting is June 11.

4. Accessibility Act

Description/Update

Municipalities will need to implement the requirements under the new Act. A Joint Provincial/Municipal Committee is working to develop tools for municipalities to use in 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

UNSM continues to support municipalities with asset management planning, as a requirement of the 2014-24 Gas Tax Fund Agreement. UNSM 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 UNSM for the work completed to date, which represent approximately 40% of the total funding. UNSM 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 UNSM will produce with the FCM 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

- NSFAM Workshop on Doctor Recruitment: June 18th, Westin Halifax, 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.