



Municipal Cannabis Working Group

Term of Reference September 2017 (Draft)

1. Name

The name of the group will be the Municipal Cannabis Working Group.

2. Authority

Established jointly by the Association of Municipal Administrators Nova Scotia (AMANS), and the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM). The Working Group will report to the Board of Directors of UNSM and AMANS.

3. Background

The impending legalization of cannabis across the country will have significant impacts on municipalities. To prepare for this, the UNSM, in conjunction with AMANS and the NS Health Authority, hosted a Cannabis Legalization Symposium in Halifax on May 26, 2017. The event was very well attended with 150 municipal, healthcare and policing officials participating. A range of issues were discussed regarding the challenges and opportunities associated with the legalization of cannabis.

Following the event, discussions took place indicating that municipalities should get together to propose their own recommendations for the Province to consider when cannabis is officially legalized by July 2018. While the Province is having discussions currently, municipalities are not at the table. While this may change, it would be beneficial if municipalities could develop their own recommendations in advance of provincial decisions on this file. In addition, municipalities can begin developing policies and bylaws particularly with respect to the workplace.

4. Mandate

- To develop a series of recommendations for the Province to consider when developing cannabis regulations
- To develop a series of model bylaws and policies to assist municipalities in preparing for cannabis legalization.

5. Objectives

The committee will carry out its mandate by:

- reviewing existing Federal Regulations
- making a recommendation on the minimum age to consume cannabis (current federal standard is a minimum age of 18)
- exploring tax sharing agreements between all levels of government
- looking at agricultural opportunities in rural municipalities
- making recommendations on the location and concentration of retail outlets including a veto clause for those units who may decide not to have any retail distribution within their boundaries
- making recommendations to address grow ops in both single family dwellings and apartment buildings
- Developing a model terms of reference for those municipalities interested in establishing a committee to respond to community concerns with respect to public health and safety issues associates with cannabis legalization
- making recommendations around policing and enforcement
- Developing model human resource policies for municipalities with respect to cannabis impairment in safety sensitive positions as well as duty to accommodate.
- Engage necessary external expertise to assist the committee in fulfilling its mandate.
- Exploring other issues as required.

6. Working Group Composition:

This working group should have competencies related to human resources, law enforcement and municipal planning.

The Working Group shall be comprised of the following representation:

- Up to 2 representatives from AMANS
- Up to 2 representatives from UNSM
- Up to Four representatives from law enforcement
- Up to 3 representatives from NS Planning Directors Association
- A member of the Department of Municipal Affairs will serve as a non-voting member.
- The Working Group shall elect a Chair and a Vice Chair who may be elected or appointed municipal officials.

Note: From time to time the Committee may invite subject experts and specialized resources to aid the committee in meeting its mandate. Persons other than Committee members may, with permission of the Committee, attend any meeting to provide information, make a submission or provide feedback. Such persons may, with the permission of the Chair, speak on an issue but do not have a vote on the committee.

7. Sub-Groups

- The Working Group may establish sub-groups as required to achieve its purpose.
- At least one member of the Working Group shall be a member of a sub-group.
- Sub-group members shall be selected by the Working Group.
- Sub-group members may be selected from organizations outside of those represented on the Working Group.

8. Term of Office

- This is an ad hoc committee; once the work is completed the term of office expires.
- The term of the work is anticipated to be completed by November of 2018

9. Meetings:

- Meetings shall be held as required.
- Every attempt will be made to schedule meetings at least 7 days in advance.
- The initial meeting will be face-to-face. Subsequent meetings may be held via teleconference.

10. Quorum:

A quorum shall be 50 percent of voting members plus one committee member.

11. Decision Making

The members of the Working Group shall make every effort to come to consensus during the decision-making process. The Working Group will use consensus decision making to facilitate better decisions through:

- including the input of all Working Group members
- including and respecting all parties, and generating as much agreement as possible
- setting the stage for greater cooperation in implementing the resulting decisions
- promoting atmosphere that fosters group cohesion and interpersonal connection

When members cannot reach agreement, the Working Group may have a motion put forth which requires a vote to be taken.