

Alberta Municipalities Update – September 2024 (Verbal)

Recommendation

That the Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA) Committee recommend that Council receive this verbal report and distribution for the Corporate Record.

Alberta Municipalities Convention

The Alberta Municipalities (ABmunis) convention will occur in Red Deer at the Westerner Park from 2024 September 24-27. Registration is still open on the ABmunis website.

Calgary forwarded two motions for advocacy at the convention:

- Council voted unanimously to support a motion to advocate for doubling the fines for speeding in school and playground zones. The Village of Duchess seconded the motion.
- Council also passed a motion to advocate for the inclusion of permanent residents in municipal voting, and the Town of Penhold seconded the motion.

There are 27 resolutions up for debate at this year's convention. The Intergovernmental Relations team will be circulating briefing materials for all members of Council who plan on attending.

ABmunis Board of Directors

The 2024 call for nominations for the Alberta Municipalities Board of Directors is open until midnight on 2024 September 13. Five positions scheduled for election for a two-year term, including Directors for Villages East and West, Directors for Towns West and South, and a Director for Cities up to 500,000. Three Vice-President Positions open for one-year term including Vice-President - Villages and Summer Villages, Vice-President - Towns, and Vice-President - Cities up to 500,000. Information and Nomination Packages can be found on the ABmunis' website.

ABmunis Committees

Municipal elected officials or senior administrators who want to shape the direction of Alberta Municipalities' policy and advocacy work can apply to serve on an ABmunis committee. Committees allow members to influence the direction of policy and programs while ensuring their municipality's interests are addressed. Applications are due by Friday, September 27. More information is available on the ABmunis website.

Municipal Grant Survey

ABmunis has a survey open until midnight tomorrow - September 6 - on municipal grant funding. The survey results, along with insights from focus groups, will inform ABmunis general and grant-specific recommendations on the funding municipalities receive from the Government of Alberta. The survey is available through the ABmunis' website.

Provincial Engagement

ABmunis took part in virtual engagement offered by the province on Bills 18 and 20 over the month of August.

Bill 18: ABmunis raised concerns over the regulations associated with Bill 18 including the potential to add unnecessary red tape which would exacerbate timelines associated with federal funding, and advocated for high minimum thresholds to reduce the number of municipal-federal agreements which require provincial oversight.

Bill 20: ABmunis highlighted the potential for Bill 20 to fundamentally redraw the blueprint for local democracy highlighting, among other concerns:

- The ability to dismiss councillors and repeal bylaws without rationale being publicly disclosed.
- The introduction of political parties to municipal elections.
- The increased cost and responsibility for municipalities stemming from the requirement for virtual public hearings, prohibiting vote tabulators and maintaining voter lists.
- Lack of consultation with municipalities.

Drought

Alberta Municipalities highlighted that the province recently released an updated Drought Response Plan that categorizes drought stages by river basin. The new response plan is accessible through Alberta.ca.

We look forward to seeing everyone for the convention in Red Deer.

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General Manager Chris Arthurs concurs with the information in this verbal update.