

December 16, 2011

Chair and Members
Finance and Administration Committee

RE: Report of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Board of Directors Meeting - Ottawa - November 29 – December 3, 2011

OVERVIEW

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Board of Directors meetings took place in Ottawa from November 29 to December 3, 2011. Our annual Advocacy Days meetings with Members of Parliament were held during this time.

Over the five days, there were many high points – such as a private meeting with Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Another important moment came in the form of a federal government announcement that will ultimately lead to billions of dollars in long-term infrastructure funding for Canada's municipalities.

On November 30, the Honourable Denis Lebel, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, launched the formal engagement process that will bring together the Government of Canada, FCM, provinces, territories and others to develop a new Long-Term Infrastructure Plan beyond the expiry of the Building Canada Plan in 2014. It was one of many highlights from the FCM meetings. Below is a recap of other key activities.

Advocacy Days

We completed our most successful Advocacy Days to date as we held important face-to-face meetings on Parliament Hill to strengthen the partnership between municipalities and federal decision-makers. In all, FCM's directors participated in a record 113 meetings with MPs, including the Prime Minister, five cabinet ministers, nine Parliamentary Secretaries and three opposition party leaders. The objectives of the meetings:

1. Build relationships between federal and municipal elected officials;
2. Build support among all federal elected officials for the Long-Term Infrastructure Plan; and
3. Build support towards future federal-municipal partnerships on other issues critical to communities and the country.

During Advocacy Days meetings, FCM's directors provided each MP with a customized information sheet about his/her riding. The sheet summarized the vital funding that municipalities in the riding receive through FCM-advocated federal programs such as the Gas Tax Fund, the GST Rebate and the Building Canada Fund.

Strategic Planning Session

On Friday, December 2, the Board of Directors met to discuss and provide direction around FCM's Strategic Plan. The directors considered a wide range of Strategic Plan input that FCM gathered recently during a nation-wide consultation process that involved member municipalities, non-member municipalities and FCM staff. The plan, which will be presented to the Board for approval in March 2012, aims to chart how FCM can best serve its members over the next five years.

Standing Committees and Forums

FCM's standing committees and forums met to discuss the latest developments and to make recommendations to the Board of Directors. A summary of these activities is provided below.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE NORTHERN AND REMOTE FORUM

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The Chair opened the meeting and was pleased to note the presence of several new participants on the Northern and Remote Forum, in particular representatives of the provincial North. Members introduced themselves and added items to the agenda. The meeting began with a presentation by FCM staff about the Municipal Infrastructure Forum (MIF). It was emphasized that this was not decision making body but was a venue for intergovernmental and inter-organization exchange through which agreement could be reached on broad principles for the new long term infrastructure plan. Members of the forum made suggestions to support the process such as working with provincial and territorial associations when approaching the provinces and territories. This would serve the dual purpose of strengthening FCM's relationship with the provincial and territorial associations. Members were supportive of the forum's potential role in supporting the MIF Rural, Remote and Northern Advisory Committee.

The Forum members also discussed advocacy days and intelligence they had gathered. They noted that Conservative MPs in particular were adamant that housing or social housing not be lumped into the long-term infrastructure plan. The government has a very specific definition of infrastructure that does not always correspond to northern and remote realities. Lessons from previous programs, including the shorter construction season in the north and the fewer number of contractors need to be taken into consideration in any future program.

Finally members discussed the plan to develop an economic development focused policy development strategy for the North: including issues of housing, attracting immigrants and tax policy. Members also pointed to the need for better mapping for shipping in the North and possible lessons to be drawn from the Northwest Corridor Development Corporation.

FORUM RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for adoption:

1. Develop a policy and advocacy agenda on northern economic development focused on the role played by the northern resident tax deduction, northern housing and communications infrastructure;
2. Support the work of the Rural, Remote and Northern Communities Advisory Committee of the Municipal Infrastructure Forum, by providing a northern and remote perspective on infrastructure issues.

Recommendations for referral to staff:

3. Look into inviting the Northwest Corridor Development Corporation to FCM's meetings in Saskatchewan.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENTS SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The chair welcomed members and went over amendments to the agenda including the withdrawal of an emergency resolution on wood stoves that will be deferred until March at the request of the sponsor.

Members then had a roundtable discussion regarding their Advocacy Days experiences, noting that the context of the majority government has changed the dynamic of these meeting. Expectations about Advocacy Days would have to be tempered going forward. In general all MPs were receptive to FCM and its objectives, particularly the long-term infrastructure plan. Opposition MPs, while supportive of our approach, wanted more substantive asks to champion aggressively, such as indexing the gas tax or dedicated funding for transit. Many MPs were also interested in receiving help from FCM to advance their own agenda items.

The Committee received an update on the Green Economy Report, which has gone for production. The report will be launched at the opening plenary panel of the 2012 Sustainable Communities Conference and also has a scheduled media release date.

This was followed by a discussion of FCM's appearance before the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources. It was an important opportunity to share the committee's work and to highlight the lessons learned through FCM's energy related programs. FCM's National Programs department updated the committee on the reopening of the Green Municipal Fund and its new approach to capital project evaluation. It has also revised the types of plans that are eligible for funding; sustainable community plans have been replaced by Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plans and Milestones 1 to 3 of the Partners for Climate Protection Program (PCP).

Finally staff presented an overview of the Municipal Infrastructure Forum (MIF) and presented recommendations for the engagement of the EISD committee in the work of the MIF Climate Change Adaptation and Resilient Infrastructure Advisory Committee.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for adoption:

1. Ask the Chair of Standing Committee on Environmental Issues and Sustainable Development (EISD) to work with the Chair of the Municipal Infrastructure Forum (MIF) to determine how EISD will support the work of the MIF *Climate Change Adaptation and Resilient Infrastructure Advisory Committee*.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON MUNICIPAL FINANCE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Committee Chair Don Downe welcomed new and returning committee members and introduced the committee vice chairs: Councilor Réjean LaForest, from City of Saguenay, Quebec and Mayor Jerrod Schaffer from City of Swift Current, Saskatchewan.

The committee approved the report of the September 2011 meeting. Next, the committee considered the action items status report. Staff presented updates related to the upcoming Supreme Court of Canada case involving the Halifax Regional Municipality appeal on payments-in-lieu of taxes (PILT). This case will be an important component to telling our partnership story in Ottawa: PILTs represent a common sense solution to the costs municipalities bear from services these federal properties. Staff will report back in March 2012 with an update from our intervention in that case.

Next the committee heard an update from staff and members of the FCM-DFAIT Joint Working Group (JWG) on the status of negotiations between Canada and the European Union on CETA. The JWG recently met with Canada's chief negotiator following the ninth round of negotiations between the two countries. The committee reiterated that we have made tremendous progression this file. However, there are still some remaining areas of concern that require vigilance. For example, committee members felt that FCM must take a leadership role in keeping our member Provincial/Territorial Municipal Associations up to speed on these negotiations. Furthermore, committee members suggested a small, informal member survey which would aim to secure input on the potential impacts of CETA. Many questions were raised that will be brought back to DFAIT through the JWG when it next meets.

The committee then heard from FCM staff on an update to the *President's Report on the State of Canada's Cities and Communities*. This report has evolved into a series of events and activities, to share our core message to a wider audience. All of this work will help position and promote the policy and advocacy work we do each year.

Finally, the committee considered the draft terms of reference for scoping research into the municipal role in attracting international investment. Each year, municipalities large and small leverage relationships and build partnerships with municipalities and private sector industries around the world. The committee agreed that scoping out what opportunities and challenges exist for a more sustainable, strategic partnership with the federal government to support these activities will help identify areas to build stronger value for members.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for adoption:

1. Approve the terms of reference for scoping research into the municipal role in attracting international investment and direct staff to report back on the findings of this research in March 2012;
2. Approve the proposal to develop a *President's Forum on the Future of Canada's Cities and Communities*, that includes the spring 2012 launch of:
 - a. The *State of the Cities and Communities Report*, including a report release event at a national business club
 - b. A major event on the opening morning of the 2012 annual conference,
 - c. Telephone town halls in the lead up to the conference, and
 - d. The creation of a President's Permanent Advisory Committee

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The Chair welcomed new and returning committee members.

A fulsome discussion arose out of the approval of the Report of the September 2011 Meeting, about the ongoing importance of emphasizing crime prevention in our 2011-2012 policy priorities and advocacy.

During their Advocacy Days debrief, members reported that overall, FCM messages resonated very well with Members of Parliament. Several MPs requested follow up materials and expressed strong interest in working with FCM in the future. Members also reported that on the issues of policing and RCMP contracts few MPs were familiar with the issue or FCM's position. Committee members noted their support for and the usefulness of the new riding specific leave behind documents and recommend that FCM find opportunities to follow up with MPs on a regular basis by providing updated riding specific materials. Other successful tools and approaches that members recommend for future meetings include asking MPs how FCM and its members can help the MP and reminding MPs that FCM and its members are a resource for them. Councillor Jenny Gerbasi spoke of the successful regular meeting of Manitoba members with their federal counterparts and encouraged all members to consider this approach in the future.

Councillor Bob Long provided a summary of a recent meeting of the Joint Committee on Community Corrections and thanked his committee colleagues who also sit on that committee. Arising from this summary, the Committee directed staff to invite University of Ottawa Professor Irvin Waller, as soon as possible, to present to this Committee on the issue of crime prevention. Staff provided an update on FCM's work with the Health Canada on reform to the Medical Marijuana Access Regulations and the working group of municipal staff experts. Staff also provided an update on the President's policing and public safety tour, as well as a brief analysis of Bill C-10.

Mayor Peter Kelly brought the issue of a National Alert System to the attention of the Committee. Mayor Kelly agreed to the Committee's request to prepare a paper for the Committee for further discussion.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for referral to staff:

1. That staff invite University of Ottawa Professor Irvin Waller as soon as possible, to present to this Committee on the issue of crime prevention.
2. That staff to provide Committee a written analysis of Bill C-10 and its potential impacts on municipalities.
3. Staff continues to ensure that crime prevention is adequately incorporated, where appropriate, into FCM community safety and crime prevention policies.
4. Staff provide clarification on accuracy of the adopted Policy and Advocacy Priorities.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE RURAL FORUM

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Chair David Marit welcomed everyone to the Rural Forum and introduced our new member President Churence Rogers of the Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, and President Heath Slee of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities.

After the approval of the minutes, the committee reviewed the Action Item Status report. As a follow up to the letter sent to Minister Kent about the closing of the Marine Rescue Coordination Centres, it was recommended that a meeting be arranged with Minister of Fisheries and Oceans as soon as possible with appropriate Atlantic Regional Committee representatives.

President Berry Vrbanovic brought the Forum up to date on Minister Lebel's infrastructure announcement. In it, there was a solid commitment to address the needs of Canada's rural and northern communities. President Vrbanovic reiterated the importance of focusing on the needs of rural and northern communities considering the enormous challenges these communities face.

In order to ensure the voice of the rural communities is addressed, as part of the Municipal Infrastructure Forum, an Advisory group will be created that will specifically focus on those rural and northern needs. It was noted, that the Municipal Infrastructure Forum was about coalition building and not a decision-making body. As always, final decisions will still be run through the Rural Forum and Board.

The Rural Forum then had a discussion on the definition of rural and its implications on funding. It was concluded that FCM and the Rural Forum should focus on the needs, challenges and limitations of rural communities and to approach the question from a program design lens.

A presentation was provided on the Sustainable Communities Conference program. The program this year has given particular attention to rural communities and their concerns. In addition, given the financial constraints of many smaller communities, all plenaries and the rural/small communities' content will be available online through webcasting. Further details to be found online.

Councillor Lorne Olsevik gave an update on the need for FCM to be involved in the 700 MHz auction. Specifically FCM should lobby for requirements to be included in the auction specifying that if winning carriers don't use their spectrum in rural areas, their forfeit their access to it. This would allow for smaller providers to enter the market and would increase competition in rural areas.

Councillor Don Forfar gave the Forum an update on the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA). Minister Vic Toews, at the AMM conference last week, announced new changes. It is expected that the new changes will impact the funding formula which will result in municipalities paying more. It was recommend by the Forum for staff to look into this issue.

FORUM RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency recommendation for referral to the Executive Committee:

1. Seek an urgent meeting with the Honourable Keith Ashfield, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, in regards to the closing of the Marine Rescue Coordination Centres, with appropriate FCM Atlantic Regional Committee representatives.
2. Urge the Government of Canada to add requirements to the 700 MHz bandwidth spectrum auction to ensure winning carriers build out their network in rural areas;

Recommendations for referral to staff:

3. Examine proposed up-coming changes to the DFAA and the potential impacts on municipal governments and make recommendations for any improvements to assist municipalities in times of disasters.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The Chair welcomed the committee to Ottawa and led a round of introductions followed by a discussion about Advocacy Days.

The committee discussed the success of Advocacy Days and the overwhelmingly positive response to our presence on Parliament Hill. Members noted that they repeatedly heard of the desire from all political parties to work more closely with FCM and reported that FCM's reputation and presence in Ottawa continues to grow. The Committee identified the need to ensure that MPs understand that infrastructure refers to more than roads and waste systems and includes cultural and social infrastructure as well.

Most MPs welcomed hearing more regularly from FCM and the Committee strongly agreed that FCM staff and members should be in more regular contact with more Members of Parliament. The Committee expressed full support for the usefulness of the new riding specific leave behind documents and recommended a number of further ways these can be used beyond advocacy days to inform and reach out to federal politicians. The Committee agreed that presenting ourselves as partners and a resource and that we weren't there to ask for money was a successful approach to building relationships. The Committee provided a number of other constructive suggestions and recommendations for future advocacy days that staff will relay to advocacy days' coordinators including the need for more regionally organized meetings, providing committee members with staff notes from the MP meetings and the importance of meeting with Senators.

Staff provided an update on FCM's immigration report, upcoming Quality of Life Reporting System report on Rental Housing and a review of FCM's rental housing incentives. The Standing Committee passed a motion praising FCM staff for their work and support throughout advocacy days.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation for referral to staff:

1. Staff provide the Committee with the technical background to FCM's rental housing incentives.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION POLICY

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Committee chair Raymond Louie welcomed new and returning members to Ottawa. The Chair introduced the vice-chairs: Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti from the City of Toronto and Councillor Brian Pincott from the City of Calgary.

Discussion opened with a review of the action item status report. Councillor Merrill Henderson (the co-chair of the FCM-RAC Railway Proximity Initiative) provided the committee with an update on the work being undertaken by the group. The proximity initiative has been highlighted in numerous international venues as a model for municipal-railway cooperation. Building more rigorous communications protocols between municipalities and railways continues to be a priority of the group.

The committee then continued with a discussion of key takeaways and messages from the meetings with MPs, Senators and other federal officials over the past two days. Generally, the committee felt they were well prepared and noted, specifically, the success of the issue-specific leave-behinds in delivering the core messages. While members noted that a few meetings were cancelled at the last minute, it was generally felt that the quality of the meetings overall has been steadily improving over the years. There has been a marked shift in how our members are being received by both the Government and opposition MPs. The primary concern from committee members related to the need to develop more specific asks in the future.

While the partnerships story has been one that has resonated in previous years, developing specific asks like changes to regulation may place a political point to these types of meetings and help contribute to a sense of forward motion in municipal-federal relations more broadly.

Next the committee received a substantive update on the Government of Canada's announcement of a process to develop a long-term infrastructure plan. A key opportunity exists for FCM. Discussions around a long-term plan illustrate the need for capacity-building support within the plan to ensure that our members can maximize the federal investments in the future. Once this concept receives buy-in from the federal government, FCM can then position itself to be one of the best options to deliver these programs. As such, the committee considered the idea of an "campaign 2014" to structure and focus our internal resources toward presenting this option as the long-term plan unfolds.

Within this discussion, the committee discussed the terms of reference for the Municipal Infrastructure Forum (MIF). There was clear support for this initiative and members recognized the need to coordinate and strengthen infrastructure stakeholder messaging throughout the long-term planning process. Members asked for clarification on three fronts: first, that language be included which clearly indicates how MIF will interact with the FCM board; second, that the objectives of MIF speak to this process as supporting a "Canadian initiative" as opposed to a Government initiative; and, finally, that consideration be given to including representation from the municipal planning field.

The committee then heard brief updates from staff on two Rights-of-Way related issues: first, that the CRTC has launched (and suspended) a process to develop a model municipal access agreement for use by municipalities and telcos. Staff updated the committee on the work that the Technical Committee on ROW has undertaken to pull together FCM's positions on ROW to inform this process. Second, staff provided a quick update with respect to the Minister of Industry's expected decision as to whether or not to open the federal policies relating to co-location of telco infrastructure. Staff will monitor this file and report back in March if an opportunity to forward this file presents itself.

Finally, the committee heard a brief update on the status of FCM's transit/transportation advocacy. Staff referenced an upcoming report from the House Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Communities that will explore the role of public transit in Canada, specifically with respect to economic competitiveness. Further, the MIF will provide an opportunity to explore the importance of transit and transportation funding within the long-term infrastructure plan.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for adoption:

1. Urge the Government of Canada to ensure that its new long-term infrastructure plan also builds the capacity of municipalities to plan, build and maintain infrastructure;

Recommendations for referral to staff:

2. Direct staff to develop and implement a strategy to convince the federal government that part of the long-term infrastructure plan's capacity building investments be directed through FCM; and
3. Direct staff to report back to the Board at each meeting on its plans and activities to achieve this new federal investment in FCM's capacity building services;

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Following the introductions of the members of the committee, the Chair, Councillor Lise Burcher, called for a motion to receive the report from the November 2011 committee meeting.

The committee then received its first report on networks and relationships, including a special presentation from the Chair of the Standing Committee on Municipal Finance and Intergovernmental Arrangements, Mayor Don Downe, on the economic development research to be conducted at FCM, the new connections made with municipal partners in Mexico, and the potential for collaboration together, with the International Committee, on engaging members to leverage twinning partnerships for economic development. The Committee also heard reports on FCM's work within the Commonwealth Local Government Forum on local economic development as well as the Annual Meeting of the Association Internationale des Maires Francophones, attended by a delegation from FCM and various francophone members.

Councillor Burcher then announced three appointments of international governance representatives: Brenda Hogg, Regional Councillor (Richmond Hill, ON) was assigned Gender Representative for the Municipal Partners for Economic Development Program; Brian Pincott, Councillor (Calgary AB) was assigned Program Steering Committee Representative for the Haiti-Canada Municipal Cooperation Program; and Dorothy Hector, Councillor (Kingston, ON) was assigned the chair of the Task Group on International Natural Disasters.

Following these announcements, the committee heard several reports on business development and revenue diversification, as well as program reports from the Municipal Partners for Economic Development Program, the Haiti-Canada Municipal Cooperation Program and the Municipal Local Economic Development Program in Ukraine. A call was made for members to volunteer their time for the International Natural Disaster Task Group and/or the FCM International 25th Anniversary Task Group.

The meeting closed with an informal activity which provided members with the opportunity to visit kiosks displaying information on FCM's international programs and to speak with departmental staff about the details and nature of FCM's work overseas.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for adoption:

1. To continue to collaborate and strengthen knowledge sharing with the Standing Committee on Municipal Finance and Intergovernmental Arrangements in the area of leveraging international partnerships for economic development in Canadian municipalities.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON INCREASING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Committee Chair Pam McConnell began the meeting by welcoming everyone to Ottawa and invited committee members and observers to introduce themselves.

The committee then approved the agenda, the report from the Nelson Board Meeting, and its action items. This included verification of members who are serving on our scholarship and program development subcommittees, and as liaisons to the Standing Committee on International Relations.

Following these approvals the committee heard a series of reports.

Jennifer Mowbray, Program Manager for the Getting to 30% Program, then provided an overview of the activities of the program this fall, including the results of the recent municipal elections in British Columbia. Regional District Chair Susan Gimse and Councillor Garth Frizzell then provided lessons learned and best practices from their respective communities of Squamish and Prince George – each of which hosted a workshop. The British Columbia municipal elections of November 2011 saw the percentage of women mayors increase from 23% to 27%; the percentage of women councillors increase from 33% to 36%; and the percentage of regional district coordinators rise from 26% to 28%. Kamloops City Councillor Nancy Bepple moved that the committee put out a press release recognizing these advances. This was then passed unanimously by the committee.

Next, Protégé Program Coordinator Emily Goodacre presented a summary of the program to date. The update began with an announcement of three of the four host communities: Edmonton, Alberta; Thompson, Manitoba; and Wainfleet, Ontario. Submissions are still being sought for the fourth pilot, in a francophone community. The update then provided an overview of a recent workshop and series of meetings in Edmonton, Alberta and upcoming meetings and discussions in Thompson, Manitoba. It also outlined the timeline for the major deliverables of the program. Following the update, Edmonton City Councillors Karen Leibovici and Ben Henderson both provided some insight into the progress of the program in Edmonton and suggestions were received on how to further adjust the program to meet the needs of the full spectrum of Canadian communities.

Finally, Mayor Debra Button of Weyburn, Saskatchewan provided an update on her work with FCMI in Ukraine. On November 15th and 16th, 87 women and 40 men - attended the first Municipal Local Economic Development sponsored *Ukraine Forum on Securing Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men in Local Governance*. The Forum was organized by FCM and the Association of Ukrainian Cities (AUC) and provided the first ever opportunity for mayors, deputy mayors and councillors (“deputies”) from the 25 regions of Ukraine to discuss issues pertinent to enabling rights and opportunities for women and men at the local level.

The meeting closed by discussing and debriefing from the Advocacy Days meetings

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations for adoption:

1. That the Standing Committee and FCM publicize the success in increasing elected women officials following the November municipal election results in British Columbia.

Respectfully submitted by

Harold Usher
Councillor, Ward 12
FCM Board Member

Joni Baechler
Councillor, Ward 5
FCM Standing Committee Member