

December 16, 2019

FCM Report for RMA Members

Rural Alberta has a strong voice on the FCM Board of Directors and at Committee Tables

The **Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Board of Directors** is comprised of elected municipal officials and affiliate members from all regions and various-sized communities across Canada. The FCM board meets quarterly to develop policy position on key national municipal issues and sets priorities that reflect the concerns of municipal governments and FCM's affiliate members. The FCM Board of Directors met November 26 – 29 in Ottawa.

RMA is well represented at FCM board meetings at both the board and committee levels with the following members appointed:

- Board members representing rural Alberta:
 - Al Kemmere, RMA
 - AnnLisa Jensen, Parkland County
- Committee members:
 - Wayne Bokenfohr, Sturgeon County
 - Robin Kurpjewit, Cypress County
 - Steve Upham, County of St Paul
- Joint association (RMA and AUMA) board and committee representatives:
 - Krista Balsom, RM of Wood Buffalo
 - Katie Berghofer, Strathcona County

These representatives bring the rural perspective to the board and committee discussions, championing the need for a rural lens to be applied to policy discussions. While not all positions are in unison with the final positions of FCM, the rural voice is at the table.

The FCM has developed a **Report to Council** summarizing activities of the November 2019 Board Meeting. The following key items are highlighted for RMA members specifically.

FCM Advocacy Days 2019

Each November, the FCM board holds its “Advocacy Days,” during which board members connect with the federal government on a direct level. FCM board members typically meet with over 120 senators and members of parliament (MPs) during Advocacy Days to bring municipal issues to their attention; however, this year's approach was unique due to the recent federal election. As there were limitations as to the number of MPs with physical offices, FCM shifted their focus to inviting various senior elected officials to meet with the board and executive.

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As identified in the [FCM's report to council](#), meetings and round table discussions allowed us to bring municipal issues to the table and encourage responses from the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, and numerous cabinet ministers. This meeting format also provided valuable opportunity to meet with the leaders of the federal Conservative and NDP parties.

FCM Governance Review Task Force

FCM's governance model was a key discussion item at the November board meeting as the Governance Review Task Force (GRTF) brought their first draft of proposed governance changes to the Committee of the Whole to gather input. There were some significant discussions with direction being provided to the GRTF, which will inform further development of the recommendations. Continued discussions on the governance review will take place at the March 2020 board meeting.

Western Economic Solutions Task Force

The [Western Economic Solutions Taskforce \(WEST\)](#) was announced by FCM in November and held its first face-to-face meeting during the FCM board meeting in Ottawa. Items discussed included reviewing the taskforce terms of reference (TOR) and the following four priority discussion areas:

- Getting resources and products to market
- Energy development and climate policy and regulation
- Supporting communities through diversified economies
- Municipal infrastructure and fiscal sustainability

The first change made to the TOR was to offer an invitation to have British Columbia join Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba at the WEST the table as many of the items being discussed affect B.C. similarly to the prairie provinces. The timelines on the deliverables for the taskforce are quite short as a report on items and progress is expected to be delivered to the board of directors in March 2020. The RMA board may source input on issues being addressed by WEST from our members in the near future.

Post-election Advocacy

Post-election advocacy was also the focus of conversation, particularly related to the FCM's call to action in [Building Better Lives Together: First 100 Days of Federal Government](#). This municipal call to action represents key advocacy focusing on issues of interest to RMA members, including broadband, rural economic development, and the use of a "rural lens" to inform government policy development and decision-making. These priority items continue to be key in supporting sustainable rural communities in Alberta and across Canada. Support for roads and bridges that can be delivered through a reasonable application process that recognizes the limited capacity of rural municipalities is also a key advocacy item for FCM, and was acknowledged as a priority by several MPs during "Advocacy Days" meetings. FCM advocated that solutions are required to increase the flow of federal funding – such as that committed to the Investing in Canada

Infrastructure Program, to municipalities across Canada. Both FCM and RMA recognize that this requires working with provincial governments to develop solutions that work for Alberta's rural municipalities.

Next Steps

The next FCM board meeting will be in March 2020. RMA hopes to have significant discussions on work from the WEST Taskforce, more discussion on the governance recommendations, and standing committee discussions on policy work and resolutions. The agenda for the upcoming Annual General Meeting will also be a point of discussion.

Member input is always welcomed as it is your voice at the federal level that we are tasked to deliver so please feel free to connect with AnnLisa or AI to share your thoughts. This goes a long way to having your voice heard and ensure that we are bringing the rural Alberta perspective forward.

We encourage our members to visit the [FCM website](#) to learn more about their efforts and will continue to keep members apprised of advocacy efforts leveraged by FCM at the federal level.

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