



## GOV-04: RMA Resolution Process

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to formalize the parameters involved for the resolution process used by the RMA. It includes aspects of the resolution process including oversight, guidelines, resolution types, writing and submission guidelines, the resolution session and the handling of endorsed resolutions.

**Policy Statement:** As a method of deriving member direction, the resolution process is fundamental to informing the RMA's advocacy priorities. As such, this policy formalizes all aspects of the resolution process to provide clarity and consistency.

### A. Resolution Oversight

1. The board shall establish a Resolutions Committee that comprises the five district chairs, or appointed designates, and is chaired by a board representative. The RMA Vice President shall be offered first right of refusal to Chair the Resolutions Committee. Should the Vice President choose not to chair the resolution committee, another board member will be appointed by the President. The board representative is determined at the RMA board organizational meeting.
2. Each district shall appoint a committee member and an alternate and notify the RMA of appointments on an annual basis. Districts may amend committee members as needed when extraordinary circumstances arise.
3. The RMA will provide annual training on the resolutions policy for all committee members.
4. A parliamentarian shall be engaged to support the chair during the Resolutions Session. The parliamentarian shall be appointed by the RMA Board of Directors on an annual basis.
5. The Resolutions Committee shall have power to order the resolutions to determine the order paper.
6. The RMA and/or Resolutions Committee may:
  - a) Amend the title, grammar, wording or format of the resolution provided it does not change the intent,

- b) Amend or shorten the resolution background to enhance readability,
- c) Consolidate resolutions of similar intent or subject matter and notify sponsoring municipalities of the consolidation,
- d) Divide resolutions with multiple unrelated proposals for action into separate resolutions;
- e) In the event that a resolution is deficient in meeting the guidelines of resolutions as outlined in this policy, require the sponsoring municipality(ies) to remedy the deficiency prior to adding the resolution to the order paper,
- f) In the case of submitted resolutions that duplicate the requests made in an active resolution, recommend to the resolution sponsor that the resolution be removed from the order paper, and
- g) In consultation with the sponsoring municipality, alter the operative clause of the resolution to be more outcome-oriented (see s. B6).

Unless specifically stated, the Resolutions Committee may use their discretion as to whether to consult with the sponsoring municipality when making any of the changes above.

## **B. Resolution Writing Guidelines**

1. Resolutions must include a title, preamble (whereas), operative clause (therefore be it resolved) and member background and shall be in the form:

WHEREAS ...; and  
 WHEREAS ...;  
 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta...  
 Member Background

2. Resolutions must address a topic of concern that is relevant to municipalities on a provincial or federal basis.
3. The title must provide a clear indication of the resolution's intent.
4. The preamble must provide clear, brief, factual context for the operative clause.
5. The operative clause must include the following:
  - a) A proposal for action (the "ask" of the resolution)
  - b) A resolution target (the ministry or organization required for acting to achieve the ask)
6. Members are encouraged to develop operative clauses that seek an outcome to a problem or issue, rather than a specific change to legislation, regulation, policy, etc. In most cases, an outcome-based approach will improve the likelihood of RMA achieving a successful advocacy result.
7. Resolutions must be accompanied by background information outlining the following where appropriate, and should not exceed a word count limit of 1000 words:

- a) The history of the issue,
  - b) Issue impacts, noting the provincial and/or federal impacts of the issue, where applicable,
  - c) Past or current advocacy efforts by the RMA or other organizations,
  - d) Recent incidents or developments,
  - e) Specific legislation linkages, and
  - f) Other stakeholders with a vested interest.
8. RMA will support quality resolution development by making available and regularly updating the following resources:
- a) Provide, regularly update, and make available resolution-writing support documents, including but not limited to templates, FAQs, writing tips, sample resolutions, resolution "dos and don'ts," etc.
  - b) Offer members at least one resolution writing support webinar annually to enhance their understanding and skills in crafting effective resolutions.
  - c) Identify and clearly communicate to members the RMA resolution writing support staff, offering guidance and personalized assistance.
  - d) Publish a bulletin at least three weeks in advance of the first summer and first winter district meeting, providing links to the above supports.

### **C. Resolution Submission Guidelines**

1. Resolutions may be submitted for consideration at the convention by:
  - a) A group of full members (RMA districts, see section D.1)
  - b) The Board of Directors (see section D.2)
2. Resolutions must be approved by a motion of the council(s) of the sponsoring municipality(ies) or by the RMA Board of Directors, in the event of board-endorsed resolutions.
3. Resolutions must be endorsed at a duly constituted district meeting prior to being submitted to the RMA's resolution session, with the exception of emergent resolutions and board-endorsed resolutions.
4. Prior to being added to district meeting agendas, RMA district chairs are required to share submitted resolutions with RMA for the purposes of ensuring that the resolutions are in the proper template and that all mandatory sections are included. RMA will not provide any comments on resolution content or wording as part of this process.
5. District chairs must ensure that RMA is provided at least three (3) business days to review the resolutions.
6. Districts are responsible for submitting resolutions to the RMA within one week of the completion of the district meeting in which the resolutions were endorsed.

7. If district meetings are one week or less prior to RMA's resolution deadline, the resolutions must be submitted prior to the resolution deadline.
8. Resolutions and supporting member background must be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word.

#### **D. Resolution Types**

1. District-endorsed resolutions are those submitted by a full member or group of full members through their respective district-approved process, provided it receives endorsement at a duly constituted district meeting.
2. Board-endorsed resolutions are those submitted by the RMA Board of Directors. These resolutions may be brought forward to allow membership endorsement on a formal plan or report, or to address an issue the board deems pertinent. Board-endorsed resolutions shall follow the same timelines and process as district-endorsed resolutions.

#### **E. Emergent Resolutions**

*Emergent resolutions are defined as those submitted following the RMA resolutions deadline as identified in the Resolutions Submission Guidelines. The meeting dates of individual RMA districts do not have a bearing on emergent resolutions. A sponsoring municipality that is unable to have a resolution submitted to their own district may work with another municipality to co-sponsor the resolution at the other municipality's district.*

1. Resolutions submitted after the resolution deadline assigned for each RMA convention will be forwarded to the Resolutions Committee for consideration as emergent resolutions.
2. An emergent resolution is defined as one submitted to the RMA after the resolution deadline that deals with an issue, legislative, or policy change that has arisen after the resolution deadline and requires action prior to the next RMA convention.
3. Written justification explaining why a resolution is emergent must be submitted to the Resolutions Committee along with the resolution itself.
4. Justification on why the resolution is emergent should not be included in the actual resolution document, including the background.
5. If the Resolutions Committee does not deem a submitted emergent resolution as meeting the criteria of "emergent" as defined in section E.2 of this policy, the resolution will not be added to the order paper. The Resolutions Committee Chair or designate will inform the resolution sponsor(s) of the decision of the Resolutions Committee.
6. If the Resolutions Committee deems a submitted emergent resolution as meeting the criteria of "emergent" as defined in section E.2 of this policy, the resolution will be added to the order paper at the start of the resolutions session. Additions of emergent resolutions will be voted on using a simple majority.

7. If the Resolutions Committee deems a submitted emergent resolution as “emergent,” the sponsoring municipality(ies) must provide and distribute adequate copies of the emergent resolution to all full members in attendance at convention prior to the start of the resolutions session. Convention registration numbers will be shared with the resolution sponsor to advise of the number of emergent resolution copies required.

#### **F. Resolutions Session**

1. For the purposes of the resolutions session only, quorum shall be defined as representation of a majority greater than 50% of the RMA full member municipalities who are eligible to vote. Quorum will be counted at the start of each resolutions session.
2. Only elected officials of full members are eligible to vote on resolutions and can only cast their individual vote on each resolution. Elected officials shall only use one voting device during the resolutions session.
3. Minutes will be taken for the resolution sessions including a record of the mover of each resolution and the voting results.
4. Voting may be by electronic means, by show of voting credentials, or by other methods as determined by the RMA.
5. Only elected officials of full members shall be allowed to speak during the resolutions session. Associate members, member administrative staff and guests may be permitted to speak upon recognition by the chair and consent of majority of the voting members. They may not move or second a resolution, or vote. Those speaking during the resolutions session must clearly state their name, position and jurisdiction.
6. The resolutions session shall be carried out per the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order, except where those rules may be in conflict with the bylaws and policies of the RMA.
7. If any emergent resolutions are to be presented, they will be incorporated into the Order Paper, which will be voted on at the start of the resolutions session.
8. All resolutions require a three-fifths (3/5) majority to be endorsed.
9. A sponsoring municipality may declare its intent to withdraw a proposed resolution when the resolution is introduced. Before making a motion, the sponsor shall request to withdraw the resolution. Unless there is opposition from one member, the session chair shall declare the resolution withdrawn and no further debate or comments will be allowed. If there is opposition from one or more members, the resolution will remain on the Order Paper.
10. Each resolution requires a mover. The mover will be allowed up to five (5) minutes to present the resolution.

11. Following the mover, the chair will call for members requesting clarification, proposing amendments or speaking in opposition to the resolution. The speaker will have a two (2) minute time limit. If no one rises to speak in opposition or offer an amendment to a proposed resolution, the question will be immediately called.
12. A member of the RMA Board of Directors shall be permitted to speak to provide clarity on a resolution's intent as presented that may be impacted by RMA advocacy efforts.
13. No member may speak in favour of a resolution unless a member first speaks in opposition.
14. Once a member has spoken in opposition of the resolution, debate will continue with each speaker having a two (2) minute time limit. Before the vote, the chair will allow the mover two (2) minutes total to present final comments.
15. Deferral of resolutions back to the sponsor, or tabling a resolution until a future convention will not be permitted. All resolutions included in the Order Paper will be voted on during the resolutions session in which they are introduced.
16. If the resolutions session runs short of time, the Chair has the authority to recess the session until a later time within the same convention to accommodate the presentation, debate and voting on remaining resolutions.

#### **G. Amendments**

1. A friendly amendment is one that is so simple or uniformly acceptable that it can be adopted by unanimous consent during debate. This eliminates the need for the formal amendment procedure including a second, debate, and vote. The Resolutions Chair will ask if there is any objection to including the amendment in the resolution and if there is no objection, the resolution will be amended. If there is one or more objections, the amendment will be processed using the formal procedure of second, debate, and vote. Either procedure means the assembly makes the decision on whether an amendment is made to the resolution.
2. It is at the discretion of the Resolutions Chair whether any amendment will first be processed by unanimous consent or by the more formal procedure of requiring a second, debate and vote.
3. When an amendment is processed using the formal process, it requires a mover and a seconder. The mover and seconder of the amendment will be allowed a combined two (2) minutes to speak to the amendment. Then the debate proceeds as outlined in Section F of this policy.
4. Submission of amendments to the chair or RMA designated staff in writing in advance of the start of the resolutions session is encouraged.
5. Only one amendment will be accepted at a time, and only one amendment to the amendment is permitted at a time.

6. A simple majority vote is required to pass all amendments.

#### **H. Endorsed Resolutions**

1. Resolutions passed by the voting delegates shall not be amended or modified.
2. Endorsed resolutions inform the advocacy efforts of the RMA. As such, relevant government ministries and other organizations are sent the relevant resolutions and asked to provide responses.
3. Concurrently, the RMA incorporates the positions outlined in the endorsed resolutions into the organization's advocacy strategy and other relevant documents.
4. Resolutions that receive the endorsement of the voting delegates shall be active for three (3) years.
5. Twice yearly, typically following each convention, the RMA will advise members of what resolutions are expiring.
6. Expired resolutions may be renewed by following the regular resolution procedure of bringing resolutions forward as outlined in the Resolution Submission Guidelines.

#### **I. Resolution Reporting**

1. The RMA Board of Directors will receive and assess government resolution responses and policy activities that affect the achievement of resolution objectives as they are received. Upon evaluation, both the response received and the RMA's assessment will be posted on the RMA resolution database. Following this, any status or development changes for resolutions will be communicated to members through a member bulletin. This bulletin will include links to the specific resolution entry on the RMA resolution database, ensuring that members are promptly and comprehensively informed of any updates.
2. The RMA disseminates advocacy responses and updates on a regular basis formally through the Resolution Status Update biannually, and in various meetings and speaking opportunities directly with RMA members.
3. The RMA's resolution database is publicly accessible on the RMA website.
4. The RMA will provide a monthly bulletin in Contact newsletter providing an advocacy update on a rotating selection of active resolutions.