

2010 SARM Annual Convention Resolutions

Matters Pertaining to SARM

Resolution No. 1 – 10A
RM of Bengough No. 40
RM of Rocanville No. 151

SARM Conventions

WHEREAS section 9 of Bylaw Number Four of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities outlines the provisions for holding a Midterm Convention on Wednesday and Thursday of the second week of November each year;

WHEREAS with the ease of sharing information and obtaining feedback, one annual gathering would be sufficient;

WHEREAS it seems that the attendance of the Midterm Conventions is down each year and the cost savings of one annual gathering would be significant to SARM and individual RMs and would allow more members of council to be involved in the convention process;

WHEREAS it also seems that a good portion of the information that is presented at the Midterm Convention is duplicated from that year's Annual Convention; and

WHEREAS the cost to host the Midterm Convention is becoming greater to both SARM and member municipalities;

BE IT RESOLVED that Bylaw Number Four of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities be amended to completely remove section 9 thereby eliminating the requirement to hold a Midterm Convention every year.

Resolution No. 2 – 10A
RM of Bengough No. 40

Annual Convention

WHEREAS section 2 of Bylaw Number Four of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities outlines the provisions for holding an Annual Convention on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of the second week of March each year;

WHEREAS there are many Councillors of member municipalities that are unable to attend the annual convention because of ranch related duties namely calving; and

WHEREAS in the event that the Midterm Convention is eliminated the Annual Convention will be the only convention to be attended by member Municipalities;

BE IT RESOLVED that section 2 of Bylaw Number Four of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities be amended to move the date of the Annual Convention from the Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday of the second week of March each year to the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of the second week of February each year.

Resolution No. 3 – 10A
RM of Silverwood No. 123

Purchase/Construction of New Building

WHEREAS SARM has advised that they have outgrown their existing facility and needs to begin building up a reserve fund to replace said building; and

WHEREAS SARM, along with many other agriculture-related organizations, would benefit from being housed in the same building;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM purchase or construct a building large enough to house many agricultural groups (ie: APAS, SCA).

Resolution No. 4 – 10A
North West Heavy Oil Municipalities NHOM

(A subcommittee of the North West Municipalities Association)

MREP - Maintenance and Rehabilitation

WHEREAS the Municipal Roads for the Economy Program and its predecessors, including the Heavy Haul Program and Municipal Resource Road Program, have provided much needed funding for construction of roads that experience a concentrated heavy haul throughout the year;

WHEREAS a number of municipalities have participated in these programs regularly for over 10 years;

WHEREAS many roads constructed under these programs have traffic counts in excess of 200 heavy trucks per day;

WHEREAS municipalities must ensure that these valuable assets are protected through maintenance and rehabilitation programs; and

WHEREAS maintenance and rehabilitation projects can cost up to \$400,000 per kilometer in the case of a strengthened, surfaced road;

BE IT RESOLVED that maintenance and rehabilitation projects on heavy haul routes be included as eligible projects under the 2011 Municipal Roads for the Economy Program.

Resolution No. 5 – 10A
Regina District Association of Rural Municipalities

Auditing Services

WHEREAS there are fewer accounting firms willing to conduct municipal audits; and

WHEREAS the costs of municipal audits are increasing, especially with the additional expense of the Tangible Capital Asset requirement now in place;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM investigate the possibility of setting up an auditing service for rural municipalities.

Resolution No. 6 – 10A
RM of Lipton No. 217

Municipal Amalgamation

WHEREAS cooperatives, credit unions and private sector are amalgamating to reduce costs; and

WHEREAS qualified administrators are at a shortage;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM look into amalgamating municipalities to save on costs.

Ministry of Agriculture

Resolution No. 7 – 10A
RM of Moose Jaw No. 161

Rat Eradication

WHEREAS rural municipal councils are desirous of controlling, reducing and even eliminating the Norway rat species, and related rat species thereto, in the Province of Saskatchewan;

WHEREAS hundreds of thousands of dollars are lost due to damages directly and indirectly attributable to the rat population in Saskatchewan;

WHEREAS further hundreds of thousands of dollars are spent by the Province of Saskatchewan via the Provincial Council of ADD Boards (PCAB) each year, in addition to money spent by rural municipalities, corporations and individuals in an attempt to eradicate rats;

WHEREAS the Province of Alberta has had a longstanding and successful provincial rate eradication program; and

WHEREAS policies and procedures respecting rat control and eradication vary from municipality to municipality in Saskatchewan;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM, in conjunction with PCAB and the Saskatchewan Pest Control Officers Association Inc., develop a comprehensive rat control policy for all rural and urban municipalities in Saskatchewan; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that SARM join with PCAB and the Saskatchewan Pest Control Officers Association Inc. in lobbying the Government of Saskatchewan to develop provincial rat eradication policies and programs similar to the Province of Alberta's.

Background provided by the RM of Moose Jaw No. 161: Pest control, and most particularly, rat control is an ongoing battle in Saskatchewan, which we may or not be winning. The R.M. of Moose Jaw No. 161 recently (fall of 2009) received an application for a development permit from a party interested in establishing a domestic, fancy rat breeding operation for the purpose of raising domestic rats. It was the intention of the party to grow the rats, euthanize the animals on site, and subsequently ship the carcasses in a frozen state to distributors for the reptile feed market. We viewed both the applicant and application as legitimate. To backtrack, in 2005, council had amended its Zoning and Building Bylaws in reaction to a similar occurrence in the province. Domestic, fancy rat operations were deemed as discretionary uses in our Ag-Resource Zoning District following the amendment, and our Building Bylaw reflected strict building standards for any structure housing a domestic rat operation. Pursuant to our Zoning Bylaw and The Planning and Development Act, 2007, a public hearing regarding the Development Permit Application was held. As council and administration worked through the Public Hearing process, one issue seemed to occur to all of us involved in the process time and again, that issue being that if we as rural and urban municipalities, and the Province of Saskatchewan itself through the Ministry of Agriculture, all spend hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars in order to control the rat population in the province, how then could we facilitate allowing a rat breeding operation

to be established in our municipality? The answer, we unanimously determined, was that we could not facilitate this occurrence, and the Discretionary Use Application was denied.

We came to the further realization that while we are collectively spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in an attempt to control the rat population in the province, rats are still responsible for exponentially more dollars of damage and loss to not only the agricultural community, but all residents of Saskatchewan. So, while we are engaged in a battle to control the rat population in Saskatchewan, are we really even adequately doing that? Recent events such as the situation in the City of Swift Current may suggest otherwise. The purpose of this resolution is to urge all of us as rural and urban municipalities, led by the Province of Saskatchewan, to renew efforts in this battle with an end view of reducing and even eradicating the rat population in Saskatchewan. We urge the support of all delegates for the resolution.

Resolution No. 8 – 10A

Regina District Association of Rural Municipalities

Responsibility for Taxes on Leased Crown Lands

WHEREAS all private land owners are responsible for the payment of their municipal taxes on their land;

WHEREAS the payment of municipal taxes on provincially-owned leased land is the responsibility of the lessee; and

WHEREAS some of these taxes are not paid for two or three years on some leased land by the lessee;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Provincial Government ministry responsible for leased land pay all yearly taxes on said land and build the payment into the lease agreement.

Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing

Resolution No. 9 – 10A

RM of Fertile Belt No. 183

Municipal Equipment on Municipal Roads

WHEREAS municipal equipment such as motor graders, snow plows, tractors and mowers, back hoes, etc. work on the municipal roads and road allowances on a regular basis; and

WHEREAS the municipality is responsible for ensuring that roadways are maintained to ensure that the public is able to travel safely on the roads;

BE IT RESOLVED that municipal equipment have the right-of-way over the traffic to help the operators of the equipment get the jobs done efficiently and in a safe manner; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that traffic must reduce speed to 60 km/hr or less when passing municipal equipment.

Ministry of Environment

Resolution No. 10 – 10A RM of Hart Butte No. 11

Water Supply for South Central Region

WHEREAS many rural and urban municipalities in the South Central Region of our province are now facing critical issues with respect to a predictable quantity and quality of water resources; and

WHEREAS a sustainable supply of quality water is necessary for future human, livestock and continued economic existence and growth in the region;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM work with SUMA and all other appropriate Ministries and Agencies to assist in developing strategy and planning implementation of a multi-use pipeline to the South Central Region to ensure a viable and sustainable water supply for our future.

Resolution No. 11 – 10A South Central Municipal Association

Rural Pipelines

WHEREAS Saskatchewan farmers need water for livestock and industrial use on their farms;

WHEREAS there has been a regulation in place since 2002 requiring all water associations with pipelines in rural Saskatchewan with more than 15 domestic users to upgrade their facilities and supply only potable water in these pipelines;

WHEREAS it was always intended that many of these pipelines would supply only non-potable water and that consumers themselves would upgrade this water to potable standards for domestic use;

WHEREAS 95% of the water supplied is used for yards, livestock and spraying; and

WHEREAS if it is a necessity for water for domestic use to be up to potable standards and to be regulated by Saskatchewan Environment and Saskatchewan Health, the water can be readily and inexpensively treated on the user's property rather than treating all the water;

BE IT RESOLVED that Saskatchewan Environment revise their regulations to allow rural pipelines (existing and new) to supply the class of water originally intended for the pipelines and which is now needed; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Saskatchewan Environment institute a policy of testing water intended for domestic use on individual farms.

Resolution No. 12 – 10A RM of King George No. 256

Written Permission for Hunting

WHEREAS in the past few years Saskatchewan Environment has concentrated on chronic wasting disease and herd reduction hunts; and

WHEREAS this kind of activity brings out hunters that trespass on private or leased land;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby Saskatchewan Environment to require hunters to have written permission from the land owner before entering private/leased land.

Background provided by the RM of King George No. 256: "No Hunting or Trespassing" signs do not mean anything to some hunters. Hunting season in most RMs currently overlap and allow archery & muzzle loaders and rifle hunting in camouflage hunting gear, all at the same time creating safety concerns for the owner of the land.

Weekend hunting has increased activity and owners need to be aware of who is on their land. Unauthorized entry creates fire hazards, livestock death, driving on crops, hay & pasture destruction at the expense of the landowner. Landowners see a need to be aware of who and when someone is on their land.

Ministry of Health

Resolution No. 13 – 10A

RM of Pense No. 160

RM of Lumsden No. 189

RM of Dufferin No. 190

RM of Sarnia No. 221

Funding of Long-Term Care Facilities

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the Provincial Government to ensure adequate funding for the operational costs of municipally owned long-term care facilities so that operational deficits do not become the financial burden of municipalities.

Background provided by the RM of Pense No. 160: the above-mentioned RMs (Pense, Lumsden, Dufferin and Sarnia) are among the municipalities that have ownership in the Lumsden & District Heritage Home. The home is experiencing operational deficits due mainly to Workers Compensation costs. The urban municipalities that are owners are submitting a similar resolution to the SUMA convention.

Resolution No. 14 – 10A

RM of Whiska Creek No. 106

Funding for Level 1 and 2 Personal Care Homes

WHEREAS there is a need for affordable Level 1 and 2 personal care homes in Saskatchewan;

WHEREAS the long term sustainability of personal care homes, particularly in rural Saskatchewan is in jeopardy;

WHEREAS without change the cost to live in existing facilities will soar beyond reach for the majority of seniors; and

WHEREAS this concern is delaying the construction of new facilities;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the Government of Saskatchewan to provide funding to help support Level 1 and 2 personal care home facilities.

Resolution No. 15 – 10A

RM of Willow Bunch No. 42

Doctor Recruitment

WHEREAS urban and rural municipalities are offering financial incentives to attract doctors;

WHEREAS this practice is creating a bidding war between municipalities; and

WHEREAS it is the responsibility of the Provincial Government to recruit doctors;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the Provincial Government to increase recruiting efforts to eliminate the need for municipalities to offer financial incentives to attract doctors.

Resolution No. 16 – 10A
RM of Piapot No. 110

Rural Health Care

WHEREAS an agreement between the Ministry of Health and the SMA (Saskatchewan Medical Association) requires a physician to be within 30 to 45 minutes of a hospital in order for it to maintain emergency status;

WHEREAS rural hospitals are facing temporary closures due to physician shortages to cover on-call, and patients are being moved to neighbouring facilities; and

WHEREAS alternatives like interactive TeleHealth and other options are being used in other jurisdictions to cover on-call and weekends;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the Ministry of Health to negotiate a 21st century alternative for physician on-call coverage and allow rural Saskatchewan to become an even more viable place for physicians to practice.

Resolution No. 17 – 10A
Parkland Association of Rural Municipalities

Hafford Special Care Centre & Primary Care Site

WHEREAS the Hafford Special Care Centre & Primary Care Site is sufficiently staffed to handle re-instatement of the four vacant rooms to provide space for four additional residents; and

WHEREAS the Hafford & Area Primary Care Community Advisory Network has previously requested the Prince Albert Parkland region for the past five consecutive years to re-instate the usage of these presently idle rooms for our area residents; and

WHEREAS at the March 2009 SARM Convention, we were advised that there is a shortage of level 3 and 4 beds in Saskatchewan;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM support our endeavour to seek approval from the Prince Albert Parkland Health Region and the Ministry of Health to see fit to allow for the utilization of the four vacant rooms for patient residency.

Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure

Resolution No. 18 – 10A
Regina District Association of Rural Municipalities

Regulating ATV's

WHEREAS there are regulations concerning the operation and licensing of motorcycles and snowmobiles; and

WHEREAS few, if any, regulations exist for quads and similar all terrain vehicles (ATV's);

BE IT RESOLVED that regulations be established to provide for:

- a. mandatory licensing for operation of ATV's on public roads;
- b. operation of ATV's on public roads only by licensed operators;
- c. a requirement for operators of ATV's to wear approved helmets when operating on public roads.

**Resolution No. 19 – 10A
RM of Pinto Creek No. 75**

Railway Crossing Maintenance

WHEREAS it has become apparent that some short line railways are requesting legislation be introduced which would make the road authority responsible for 100% of the cost of maintaining and/or repairing “public” railway crossings;

WHEREAS it is the responsibility of the railway owner/operator to ensure that the track and crossings remain in a safe state of repair and to provide for any necessary work to be done to those structures;

WHEREAS the road authority has no control over the operation of the track and further retains no ownership in any portion of the track or crossings; and

WHEREAS some road authorities have fair and equitable arrangements in effect for their individual situation regarding crossing maintenance and/or repair with their local short line;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM oppose any proposed legislation that would make the road authority responsible for the costs to repair and/or maintain railway crossings; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that disagreements between the road authority and the railway be settled through negotiation, and should negotiations fail, by non-partisan arbitration.

Ministry of Justice

**Resolution No. 20 – 10A
RM of Fertile Belt No. 183**

Recreational Vehicles on Private Property

WHEREAS *The Trespass to Property Act* came into effect on July 1, 2009;

WHEREAS section 13 of this statute states that if a contravention to this Act is committed by means of a motor vehicle the driver is liable to a fine; and

WHEREAS recreational vehicles (i.e. quads, dirt bikes, snow machines) can cause considerable damage to property and a fine seems insufficient;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Act be amended to state that if an offender on a recreational vehicle is found trespassing on private property and causing damage to private property, the vehicle will be seized and sold at a public auction.

Resolution No. 21 – 10A
RM of Blucher No. 343

Victim Services Fund

WHEREAS major crime is becoming more and more frequent in rural Saskatchewan;

WHEREAS there is a deficit of available officers to police rural Saskatchewan and provide services to victims of crime;

WHEREAS police-based programs are available for these people under the Victims Services Branch which would allow the RCMP to continue to better serve the public good while offering victims needed aid; and

WHEREAS programs and services administered by the Victims Services Branch are funded by the Victim's Fund which is comprised of revenue generated by fines and surcharges and does not have sufficient revenue to allow these services to be expanded;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the Provincial Government to fully fund the Victim Services Fund so that the Victims Services Branch may expand their programming to include rural Saskatchewan.

Resolution No. 22 – 10A
RM of Fox Valley No. 171

Vital Statistics Information Access

WHEREAS on March 31, 2010 the provisions of *The Vital Statistics Act, 2009*, S.S. 2009 c. V-7.21 are to come into effect;

WHEREAS one of the consequences of this will be the elimination of the Division Registrars, namely administrators of rural municipalities;

WHEREAS many rural municipal offices now possess duplicates of registration of births, marriages and deaths dated back to the municipality incorporation;

WHEREAS Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan (ISC), who now maintains the Vital Statistics Registry, are proposing to take possession of these old records; and

WHEREAS the public are aware that these records are in rural municipal offices and have used these records, to research family history and genealogy;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities lobby the Provincial Government to amend the legislation so as to permit rural municipalities to retain copies and to permit public access to all records of births, marriages and deaths registered with their office in years prior to 2010.

Resolution No. 23 – 10A
RM of Foam Lake No. 276

Access to Ombudsman

WHEREAS the Saskatchewan Ombudsman is currently barred from intervention with municipal matters;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the appropriate provincial agencies to allow the Saskatchewan Ombudsman to include within their mandate assistance to ratepayers on tax and assessment matters.

Ministry of Municipal Affairs

Resolution No. 24 – 10A
RM of Loon Lake No. 561

Land Tax on Outfitters

WHEREAS the Permitted Grazing Leases within the Saskatchewan Environmental Forest areas are presently being taxed for the use of the lands;

WHEREAS the outfitter companies are also using certain blocks within the forest and not being taxed; and

WHEREAS outfitter companies are permitted to use those lands that are also permitted to the leases;

BE IT RESOLVED that *The Municipalities Act* be reviewed with respect to the ability for municipalities to place a land tax on those outfitter areas within the forest; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Saskatchewan Environment be required to provide the information to the rural municipalities with respect to the quarter sections that the outfitter companies use.

Resolution No. 25 – 10A
RM of Prince Albert No. 461

Term of Office

WHEREAS the Minister of Municipal Affairs has announced that the terms of office for urban, northern municipal and school board officials will be lengthened to four years;

WHEREAS this decision was chosen as an innovative way of helping municipal officials with longer periods for municipal councils to plan and implement programs and longer term goals; that taxpayers will benefit from cost savings from holding fewer elections; and

WHEREAS the number of Committees and Boards that Council members are expected to become members of has increased; and that due to the often complex and long term nature of projects undertaken by these Committees and Boards, which include planning, environmental, drainage, and economic development projects;

BE IT RESOLVED that in order for rural councils to continue partnerships with our urban neighbours, government and other agencies, that rural municipal officials be included in the amendments to *The Local Government Election Act* such that, for rural municipal elections, the rotation of the terms of even and odd numbered divisions and reeve remain but that the length of the term of office be increased from two years to four years.

Resolution No. 26 – 10A
RM of Touchwood No. 248

Road Maintenance Agreements

WHEREAS there is an increased demand for gravel in Saskatchewan and haulers are required to enter into Road Maintenance Agreements with municipalities;

WHEREAS municipalities wishing to impose speed restrictions in the agreement must pass a bylaw that applies to all traffic on all roads in its municipality if multiple haul roads are used in order to enforce it; and

WHEREAS municipalities are completely at the mercy of haulers regarding compensation for the amount of gravel hauled;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM request that the Government of Saskatchewan re-evaluate the Road Maintenance Agreement in its entirety - particularly to investigate the possibility of requiring a "performance bond" from the hauler prior to entering into the agreement; and to increase the rates to better reflect the rising costs of road maintenance.

Resolution No. 27 – 10A
RM of Rudy No. 284

Taxation of Agricultural Operations

WHEREAS there exists clear inequities to certain agricultural operations within *The Municipalities Act*, (Section 293), more specifically the exemptions provided to agricultural operation residential improvements;

WHEREAS livestock operations that are able to successfully produce an agricultural commodity on relatively low assessed land are penalized with additional taxation on their residential improvement; and

WHEREAS the assessment values do not accurately reflect the true “value” of this land to the operator;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM, in cooperation with the Provincial Government, find a fair and equitable method of standardizing taxation on agricultural operations.

Saskatchewan Government Insurance

Resolution No. 28 – 10A
Regina District Association of Rural Municipalities

Grain Hauling with “F” Plates

WHEREAS present regulations severely restrict the movement of grain to terminals by F-plated trucks;

WHEREAS grain terminals often require grain at short notice to load unit trains;

WHEREAS some terminals are now beyond a 160 km radius; and

WHEREAS farmers are restricted to hauling for other farmers for payment in kind;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministry of Highways be requested to:

- a. review allowable weights on primary and secondary highways for F-plated trucks;
- b. remove restrictions on allowable distance hauled with F-plated trucks within the Province;
- c. allow farmers to haul grain for other farmers as payment in-kind (eg. swapping services); and
- d. change the permitting system to focus on volume of grain hauled, in a specific time frame, rather than the present daily, single trip permitting system.

SaskPower

Resolution No. 29 – 10A
RM of Invermay No. 305

Location of Power Poles

WHEREAS farm equipment is getting larger and, in some cases, the equipment in transport position is past the power poles on the right-of-way, which is too narrow, causing serious safety issues;

BE IT RESOLVED that SaskPower review their policy and refrain from placing power poles on a 66 foot right-of-way.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

Resolution No. 30 – 10A
RM of Blaine Lake No. 434

Tax Loss Compensation

WHEREAS the Rural Municipal Tax Loss Compensation Trust Fund has had a dramatic loss of investment income due to very low investment returns;

WHEREAS many RMs that receive tax compensation are in a deficit position from year to year with the burden being transferred to the other ratepayers within the RMs; and

WHEREAS costs to RMs continue to rise to provide services and improvements;

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM ask the Federal Government to compensate RMs for the shortfall in funding until investment rates improve; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the level of funding provided by the Federal Government for tax loss compensation be indexed to keep up with the increasing service costs of municipalities.

2010 SARM Annual Convention Point of Privilege Resolutions

Point of Privilege No. 0 – 10A

Point of Privilege Resolutions Declined to be Heard

Point of Privilege – 10A – *declined to be heard*

2010 SARM Annual Convention Resolution Summary

- 30 resolutions were submitted (0 were declined to be heard)
- 0 resolutions were presented at convention
- 0 resolutions were lost
- 0 resolutions were carried