

From: AMO Communications <communicate@amo.on.ca>
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2016 3:55 PM
To: Lisa Slomke
Subject: AMO Policy Update - AMO Report to Member Municipalities - Highlights of September 2016 Board Meeting

October 3, 2016

AMO Report to Member Municipalities: Highlights of the September 2016 Board Meeting

To keep members informed, AMO provides updates on important issues considered at regular AMO Board of Directors' meetings. Highlights of the September 30, 2016 meeting include:

Federal Infrastructure Phase 2 Design

The Board approved overarching principles and design recommendations to form its response to the federal government's consultation request. The principles are based on maximizing municipal government interests and flexibility. For example:

- identifying local funding priority is through local asset management plans;
- funding based on formula allocation for all funding streams, yet provide for a carve out for major municipal capital projects/transformational infrastructure projects;
- align federal program with local needs through municipal asset management plans (including capital plans) which means past federal incrementality requirement for funding is eliminated;
- funding eligibility expanded to local economic development projects, roads and bridges, sewer separation and climate adaptation among priorities as they are major portion of municipal assets; and
- reporting based on a federal Gas Tax model tied to the next year's allocation.

AMO Contact: Craig Reid, Senior Advisor, creid@amo.on.ca, (416) 971-9856 ext. 334.

Energy Matters

The energy landscape is evolving weekly. Bill 13, *An Act in Respect of the Cost of Energy*, outlines how the 8% residential electricity cost reduction will be implemented. The reduction is welcomed for customers, however, AMO will make a submission on the Bill seeking clarification about the confidentiality clauses, and the duration and source of revenue for the program. Bill 13 is vague on these and the impacts on municipal LDCs and how this compares to the impacts on Hydro One and the Province. AMO must get better information from the Minister of Energy on the proposed funding mechanism for the announced rural rate reduction. AMO will continue to take action on the price of energy which is economically challenging for municipal governments and our

communities. Note: Attend the Energy Symposium on November 3 and 4 to become more informed about energy now and into the future at [Energy Symposium](#).

AMO Contact: Cathie Brown, Senior Advisor, cathiebrown@amo.on.ca, ext. 342.

Expanding Medical Services

It is expected that the Province will be releasing a consultation paper shortly on a government proposal that could enable full-time firefighters, who are also certified primary care paramedics to use their medical training while working for a municipal fire service should a municipal government voluntarily agree. Premier Wynne, speaking both at the OPFFA conference in June 2016 and at the AMO conference in August 2016, has been clear that she and Cabinet want a consultation on the viability and efficacy of this proposal prior to Cabinet making an evidence-based decision to proceed or not on it. The Board will be ready to respond when the provincial discussion paper is released and members will receive an update in the near future.

AMO Contact: Amber Crawford, Policy Advisor, acrawford@amo.on.ca, ext. 353.

Ontario's Changing Workplaces Review Interim Report to Ministry of Labour

The Board received an overview of the Expert Panel's Interim Report, a major review of the *Labour Relations Act, 1995* (LRA) and the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* (ESA). It has identified about 50 issues and over 225 options for feedback by October 14th. The final report is not expected until spring of 2017. The review has significant implications for both private and public sector employers, including municipal governments. The Board provided direction for the preparation of an AMO response to the interim report.

AMO Contact: Nicholas Ruder, Policy Advisor, nruder@amo.on.ca, (416) 971-9856 ext. 411.

AMO's 2015 Federal Gas Tax Fund Annual Report

As required under the Administrative Agreement, AMO must submit an annual report highlighting Gas Tax investments in eligible projects to Infrastructure Canada by September 30th of every year. AMO board members have approved the 2015 Gas Tax annual report. The report will be sent to the federal government and distributed to the 443 Ontario municipalities for which AMO administers the Fund, Ontario MPs, and federal opposition leaders.

AMO Contact: Chris VanDooren, Gas Tax Manager, cvandooren@amo.on.ca, ext. 410.

National Housing Strategy Consultation

Affordable housing is essential for prosperous and healthy communities. The federal government has signaled its re-engagement in housing with a commitment to develop a National Housing Strategy. In Ontario, housing is a municipal responsibility unlike other provinces and territories. Given this, it is essential that AMO has a well-considered voice in the development and implementation of the national strategy. AMO's response will comment on the federal

government's proposed vision, principles, themes and outcomes as outlined on the federal website: [Let's Talk Housing](#). Comments from municipal governments, District Social Service Administration Boards, and individuals are invited up until October 21st.

AMO Contact: Michael Jacek, Senior Advisor, mjacek@amo.on.ca, (416) 971-9856 ext. 329.

Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) Presentation

Tom Teahen, President and CEO of the WSIB, provided the Board with an overview of the WSIB's priorities, claim rates for PTSD and presumptive for firefighters, its current funded position and projection for fully funded status, as well as costs and premium rates for municipal government (Schedule 1 employers) who unlike all other employers will not see rate decrease in 2017. These expected increases are attributed to the implementation of Bill 163, *Supporting Ontario's First Responders Act (Posttraumatic Stress Disorder)*, 2016.

AMO Contact: Nicholas Ruder, Policy Advisor, nruder@amo.on.ca, (416) 971-9856 ext. 411.

Health Task Force

The Board approved the establishment of a new AMO Health Task Force to provide advice to the Board on positions and advocacy strategy related to health policy issues. Deputy Mayor Mark Taylor (Ottawa) will chair the task force, with Mayor Graydon Smith, Bracebridge, acting as Vice-Chair. The Province is transforming aspects of the health care delivery and as a co-funder of significant health programs – public health, land ambulance, long-term care, AMO believes it should be involved in any policy or program review with the Province. There needs to be a better discussion on the long-term fiscal sustainability of health care services and the appropriateness of funding some of these services on the municipal property tax base.

AMO Contact: Michael Jacek, Senior Advisor, mjacek@amo.on.ca, (416) 971-9856 ext. 329.

Federal Consultations on National Accessibility Legislation

Consultation on new national legislation to increase accessibility for persons with disabilities has begun. The Board approved responding to the federal consultations noting that national legislation to increase accessibility for persons with disabilities should apply only to areas of federal jurisdiction and not the broader public sector in Ontario, including municipal governments, which is covered by provincial legislation and regulation.

AMO Contact: Michael Jacek, Senior Advisor, mjacek@amo.on.ca, (416) 971-9856 ext. 329.

Bill 14, An Act to Prohibit Door-to-Door Sales of Certain Products

A Private Member's Bill, if passed, would enact a province-wide ban on the door-to-door sale of certain household energy products but could bring impacts to municipal governments. In particular, the Board is concerned with the lack of clarity regarding the responsibility of enforcing a provincial ban. This would be a new unfunded mandate and unacceptable.

AMO Contact: Nicholas Ruder, Policy Advisor, nruder@amo.on.ca, (416) 971-9856 ext. 411.

LAS Updates

One Investment Program High Interest Savings Account (HISA) has surpassed \$180 million. The effective rate at the \$150 million level is 1.1%. LAS/CHUMS is negotiating a new effective rate and will notify municipalities as soon as possible.

AMO Contact: Jason Hagan, LAS Program Manager, jhagan@amo.on.ca, (416) 971-9856 ext. 320.

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