

MATTERS PERTAINING TO SARM

The following 2 resolutions involve changes to the SARM Bylaws and must have two-thirds of the votes cast in favor to be approved.

1-23M | Limits to Time Served as SARM President and Vice President Rural Municipality of Elfros No. 307

WHEREAS organizations need a known rotation of executive members to be able to stay fresh and vibrant.

WHEREAS an organization's executive members need to be on a known rotational timeline for the members to remain fresh and vibrant.

BE IT RESOLVED that the positions of President and Vice President of the SARM Board of Directors be limited to 4 – 2 year terms.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this bylaw change come into effect for the 2025 Presidential election.

Resolution Background:

We have noticed over the years that there should be terms on certain positions, such as board members of different organizations including their executives, council members, reeves, and the SARM board. At times the above-mentioned positions either become life sentences or they become that person's identification and they don't want to step down. In either case, they sometimes end up not doing the best job for that organization or actually doing harm to the organization.

We feel the place to start with the SARM Board is at the executive level. Terms on the two executive members of SARM, President and Vice-President would allow those members to plan their "careers" based on these terms and also allowing the board members to plan their ascension within the organization if they so desire. New faces in the leadership roles of organizations generally bring new ideas, new energy levels, new skill sets and new relationships. This is quite often a good move for an organization and its membership.

2-23M | One Annual Convention Rural Municipality of Weyburn No. 67

WHEREAS conventions are an expensive undertaking for municipalities in terms of travel, hotel rooms, expenses, and remuneration.

WHEREAS SARM previously held one annual convention until the need for two due to an influx of resolutions brought forward.

WHEREAS if a municipality presents a resolution and gathers enough support from other municipalities (based on a predetermined number) prior to the deadline, SARM could hold a virtual meeting to address the resolution(s).

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM consolidate the two conventions into one annual convention.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if a municipality submits a resolution supported by a predetermined amount of other municipalities by the deadline, that SARM may hold a virtual meeting to address the resolution(s).

Resolution Background:

Our council believes one large convention would be sufficient and that council members are generally busy during the timing of conventions. They believe by having one large convention there will be higher attendance which affects all attending municipalities and decisions made. If there was one convention and resolutions were presented with enough support during a later time in the year that they can be cast during a virtual convention, thus not missing out on opportunities and not costing municipalities additional money for delegate attendance.

3-23M | Increase to SARM Extended Health Care Coverage for Hearing Aids Rural Municipality of Britannia No. 502

WHEREAS the current maximum coverage amount for hearing aids available through all levels of SARM Extended Health Care Coverage is \$1,000 per ear every five years.

WHEREAS compared to the current actual cost of hearing aids the maximum amount of \$1,000 per ear every five years offered through SARM Extended Health Care Coverage is minimal and may be insufficient to offset costs for many municipal employees experiencing hearing loss which in turn may prevent the purchase of hearing aids by individuals who would benefit from having them.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM increase the Extended Health Care Coverage to \$4,000 per ear every five years, to ensure that municipal employees who may benefit from the use of hearing aids are able to purchase them without experiencing financial hardships.

Resolution Background:

Statistics Canada identifies hearing loss as an important health concern which is often under-treated and can have significant negative impacts of the quality of life for those experiencing it (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-625-x/2016001/article/14658-eng.htm>).

As audiometric testing is now a regular part of many municipal safety programs, municipal employees experiencing hearing loss have the opportunity to have hearing problems diagnosed and treated by health care professionals more often than they may have before such programs were adopted.

The current cost of hearing aids in Canada range from \$1,900 to \$4,200 per device (<https://www.hearinglife.ca/hearing-aids/prices-2>) and the current coverage offered through SARM is \$1000 per device, every five years. By increasing the coverage for hearing aids through SARM Extended Health Care Coverage, employees who need hearing aids may have a better opportunity to purchase the device that best suit their needs and allow them to continue living and working to the best of their ability, without experiencing significant financial hardship. Further, it should be noted that under-treated hearing loss can result in social isolation, depression, safety issues, reduced income, and reduced employment opportunities (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-625-x/2016001/article/14658-eng.htm>).

IMPACTING THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

Ministry of Environment

4-23M | Coyote Reduction Program

Rural Municipality of Lomond No. 37, Rural Municipality of Edenwold No. 158 (submitting RM), Rural Municipality of Lake Lenore No. 399

WHEREAS the province implemented the Saskatchewan Coyote Control Program as a pilot project in 2009-2010 to combat significant increases in livestock losses due to coyotes.

WHEREAS the Province halted the Saskatchewan Coyote Control Program for unknown reasons.

WHEREAS SARM members have previously submitted coyote-related resolutions in 2011, 2012 and 2018. In 2011 and 2012, the province said it had no plans to re-introduce the coyote control program. In 2018, the province provided no response.

WHEREAS Health Canada has banned strychnine as a poison, increasing Richardson Ground Squirrel populations and thus increasing coyote populations due to an abundance of prey.

WHEREAS there has been a marked increase in coyote populations in Saskatchewan.

WHEREAS existing coyote programs, including the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program, are reactive in dealing with coyotes and fail to reduce coyote populations.

WHEREAS existing coyote programs are largely oriented towards the negative effects of coyotes on agricultural producers and do not account for the negative impacts of coyotes on residential areas (including their effect on human safety and domestic animals).

WHEREAS it would be cost-effective to keep coyote populations in check, especially in known hot spots.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to reinstate the Saskatchewan Coyote Control Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED should the provincial government choose not to reinstate the Saskatchewan Coyote Control Program, that SARM lobby the provincial government to explore alternative measures to control coyote populations within Saskatchewan, such as including coyotes as an approved pest under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership cost-share rebate program.

Resolution Background:

The Province of Saskatchewan implemented the Saskatchewan Coyote Control Program as a pilot project in 2009-2010 to combat significant increases in livestock losses due to coyotes. Subsequently, the Province halted the program for unknown reasons. SARM members have previously submitted coyote-related resolutions in 2011, 2012 and 2018, however the program has not been reinstated. Furthermore, Health Canada banned strychnine as a poison, which has increased the Richardson Ground Squirrels populations and thus increased the coyote populations due to an abundance of prey. The increased coyote populations issue is ongoing. Therefore, our Council requests that the province reinstate the program or conduct further investigation.

All RMs in Saskatchewan and other areas with high coyote populations would benefit from the provisions of the Saskatchewan Coyote Control Program, or alternative measures provided by the province.

In the absence of a provincial program, our RM administers its own Municipal Coyote Control Program, which provides a bounty to hunters and trappers. This is the first instance of our RM lobbying SARM to reinstate the program or investigate alternative measures.

To have the province reinstate the Saskatchewan Coyote Control Program or, if denied, have the province explore alternative measures to control the coyote populations within Saskatchewan.

Ministry of Environment and SGI

5-23M | Insurance Coverage for Wildlife Damage

Rural Municipality of Lake Alma No. 8, Rural Municipality of Surprise Valley No. 9, Rural Municipality of The Gap No. 39 (submitting RM), Rural Municipality of Bengough No. 40, Rural Municipality of Brokenshell No. 68, Rural Municipality of Norton No. 69, Rural Municipality of Wood River No. 74, Rural Municipality of Gravelbourg No. 104, Rural Municipality of Rodgers No. 133, Rural Municipality of Chaplin No. 164, Rural Municipality of Lumsden No. 189, Rural Municipality of Marquis No. 191

WHEREAS increased deer populations are causing a negative financial impact to farming operations as a result of damage to vehicles and equipment caused by deer sheds.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to work with insurance companies to have damage caused to vehicles and farm machinery by deer sheds be insurable and that no deductible be required to be paid when making a claim.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to take steps to reduce the deer population within the province.

Resolution Background:

Farmers within the RM of The Gap No. 39 are experiencing damage to vehicles and farm machinery as a result of driving over deer sheds in fields. The cost of replacing tires on vehicles, tractors, and other equipment is costly and is becoming more common as deer populations increase.

This resolution is asking for SARM's support to lobby the provincial government to have vehicle and equipment damage resulting from deer sheds be insurable to help alleviate financial pressures.

Ministry of Agriculture

6-23M | Noxious Weed Declaration

Rural Municipality of Duck Lake No. 463

WHEREAS the weed Curly Dock, which is not native to Saskatchewan, but is native to Eurasia, is invading Saskatchewan roadsides, hay fields, and grazing areas, and is causing a decrease in both grazing areas and viable feed for livestock.

WHEREAS Curly Dock contains no nutritional value to livestock but does contain high amounts of oxalates and nitrates in the leaves and stems which can pose a risk to livestock and be potentially fatal.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to have Curly Dock listed as a noxious weed under *The Weed Control Act*.

Resolution Background:

Numerous complaints from ratepayers about a weed that 5 years ago did not exist in the RM. If this weed was included in the Weed Control Act, Weed Inspectors could help ratepayers get rid of the weed and it would be included on the Invasive Control Program.

MUNICIPAL IN NATURE

Ministry of Highways

7-23M | Rural Integrated Roads for Growth

Rural Municipality of Foam Lake No. 276, Rural Municipality of Lakeside No. 338, Rural Municipality of Barrier Valley No. 397 (submitting RM), Rural Municipality of Tisdale No. 427, Rural Municipality of Moose Range No. 486

WHEREAS the Rural Integrated Roads for Growth (RIRG) program Policy Manual states in Section 4: Road Program, Policy 2: Road Design Requirements, Point 3 “The design of the roadway shall meet the following requirements:

- a) minimum design speed of 90km/h;
- b) minimum road top width of 8.6m, crowned with a cross slope of 3 to 4%;
- c) minimum right-of-way of 42m.
 - i) the right-of-way shall be purchased and cleared;
 - ii) the roadway centreline shall be located on the centre of the 42m right-of-way.”

WHEREAS the majority of municipalities would never meet these requirements for funding.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM work with the Department of Highways to amend requirements under the RIRG program to allow a minimum top width of 8 meters and roads to be improved on existing right of ways.

Resolution Background:

We were going to apply for the RIRG program but found out about the 8.6 meter road top requirement and we don't believe we have any roads that would qualify. We have the support of a few of our surrounding RMs that feel the same way. We would like RMs to be able to qualify for this program but this requirement makes it challenging.

Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety

8-23M | Water Truck Clubs

Rural Municipality of Lake Johnson No. 102

WHEREAS an exemption from the requirements of Section 154 of *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996* pursuant to Section 3-85 of *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* is in effect with respect to the training of municipal residents contracted by rural municipalities to remove snow from municipal roads (example: snow plow clubs).

WHEREAS during periods of drought dust control methods lose their effectiveness without the reapplication of water and residents could be contracted to apply water, similar to a snow plow club, if treated in the same manner with respect to regulations.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM request an exemption from Section 154 of *The Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996* pursuant to Section 3-85 of *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* for residents contracted by rural municipalities to apply water to reactivate dust control products.

Resolution Background:

Even with two dust control applications in a season, extended periods of drought may require the application of water to reactivate dust control products on haul roads. Some of our residents have the equipment necessary to assist but are unlikely to if there are training requirements or potential fines and liability. We can increase the likelihood of contracting residents to assist with the application of water if this resolution is passed and the exemption granted.

Elections Saskatchewan

9-23M | Provincial Electoral Constituency Boundaries

Rural Municipality of Piapot No. 110

WHEREAS in Canada our federal constituencies are based on population, allowing the major cities of Vancouver, Greater Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal, with a simple majority, to elect a federal government, and leaving the prairies and the rest of rural Canada somewhat irrelevant.

WHEREAS a similar thing is happening in Saskatchewan, where the recent restructuring based on population will result in fewer rural MLA's and more representatives in the major urban centers, with the only exception being two northern constituencies, which are exempt from population criteria.

WHEREAS if the current pattern continues, in a few decades, Regina and Saskatoon will elect the provincial government and rural Saskatchewan will have little input.

WHEREAS the majority of the resources that fund the province are found in rural Saskatchewan.

WHEREAS there are other options such as using area and assessment to form constituency boundaries.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to review the current process to develop a fair and balanced approach to representation in government.

Resolution Background:

Council recognizes the probable outcome of increasing the size of the electoral constituency boundaries, and the affects that it would have on rural Saskatchewan and would like to see that prevented.

All rural constituents would have a fair say in how government dollars are spent. SARM members would be able to ensure that funds generated from rural resources are allocated equally.

We have spoken to our local MLA to discuss the implications of larger constituencies.

That factors other than population are used in creating the boundaries in which a constituency falls. The desired outcome would ensure equal representation for rural communities in provincial government, which cannot be achieved by creating constituency boundaries solely based on population.

Ministry of Government Relations and Elections Saskatchewan

10-23M | Term Limits

Rural Municipality of Weyburn No. 67

WHEREAS we see numerous elected positions having limited competition and turnover during elections cycles. A high number of acclaimed positions at the rural municipal level points to a broader lack of engagement at the ratepayer level.

WHEREAS to serve in politics is about approaching problem solving for the common good with fresh ideas, vibrancy, and energy. It should not become a life sentence out of perceived necessity.

WHEREAS a healthy democracy is paramount to the success and growth of our province, RMs, communities, businesses, farms and ensuring the best possible outcomes for our ratepayers.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to pass legislation limiting every elected municipal, provincial and school board position to no more than 2 consecutive terms or a maximum 8 years.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this change not preclude a two-term councillor to then run for a separate new term as a mayor or reeve. Nor does it preclude an MLA from then running and serving as Premier. After taking the requisite term off, a person could then run again for the same previously vacated position.

Resolution Background:

Static and stagnant councils are becoming an increasing issue at all levels of government. This resolution would affect all elected officials in the province of Saskatchewan. That the government limit elected positions to two consecutive terms and then a person would need to take one term off.

Ministry of Government Relations

11-23M | Amendment to The Local Government Elections Act, 2015 Provisions Concerning Nominations for Reeve in a By-Election

Rural Municipality of Lomond No. 37, Rural Municipality of The Gap No. 39, Rural Municipality of Edenwold No. 158 (submitting RM), Rural Municipality of Marriott No. 317, Rural Municipality of Lake Lenore No. 399

WHEREAS both rural and urban municipalities are governed by the same legislation, being *The Local Government Election Act, 2015*, and have little need for different election procedures concerning by-elections, or when an incumbent from an even division wishes to run for reeve in a general election for the reeve and odd divisions.

WHEREAS the election procedures differ for by-elections and general elections for the reeve and odd divisions in Sections 71(1)(a)(ii), 71(2), 72(1)(b), 72(2), and 72(3)(b).

WHEREAS requiring current councillors to resign before a by-election, or before running for reeve during a general election for the reeve and odd divisions, is inconsistent with the provisions for urban municipal councillors running for mayor in a mayoral by-election.

WHEREAS requiring current councillors to resign before a by-election, or before running for reeve during a general election for the reeve and odd divisions, can create a lack of quorum if there is interest amongst multiple current council members.

WHEREAS requiring current councillors to resign to run in a by-election, or before running for reeve during a general election for the reeve and odd divisions, necessitates that further by-elections must be held to fill council vacancies.

WHEREAS running numerous successive by-elections is both expensive and time-consuming for a municipality.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to amend Section 72 of *The Local Government Election Act, 2015* to include a provision similar to Subclause 71(1)(a)(ii) and Subsection 71(2) to allow current councillors the ability to run for reeve in a by-election, or for incumbents in even divisions to run for reeve in a general election for the reeve and odd divisions, without needing to resign prior to nomination OR to remove the provisions in Subsection 72(2) and Clause 72(3)(b) which force such resignations and amend Section 71 to apply to both urban and rural municipalities.

Resolution Background:

In June of 2023, the RMs reeve of 20 years resigned. The RMs next general election is too far away to include a reeve election, therefore we must host a by-election for the reeve position. When reviewing *The Local Government Election Act, 2015* for the required election procedures, we discovered any existing council members wishing to run for reeve in a by-election, or any incumbent from an even division wishing to run for reeve in a general election for the reeve and odd divisions, must resign from their existing seat first. However, we noticed that existing council members in an urban municipality wishing to run for mayor in a mayoral by-election are not required to resign from their current seat. Depending on the number of RM council members wishing to run for reeve, there could be a resulting lack of quorum and further by-elections would be required for vacant seats which is both costly and time-consuming.

All RM's would gain similar election provisions to urban municipalities, which would combat the financial and administration implications of having two consecutive by-elections in situations where the reeve resigns, and councillors choose to run in the election.

Administration has called Municipal Advisory Services to confirm our interpretation of these sections of *The Local Government Election Act, 2015*.

To have *The Local Government Election Act, 2015* amended to either remove the provision that precludes councillors from running in a reeve by-election or general election for the reeve and odd divisions, or an amendment similar to the urban provision by which this special case is exempt. The outcome would be an equitable election nomination procedure compared to urban municipalities that would prevent strain on administrative and financial resources.

12-23M | Municipal Oil and Gas Collection of Taxes

Rural Municipality of Snipe Lake No. 259 (submitting RM), Rural Municipality of Milton No. 292, Rural Municipality of Winslow No. 319, Rural Municipality of Antelope Park No. 322

WHEREAS oil and gas tax enforcement remains a problem for municipalities and some rely heavily on the effective collection of taxes in order to manage their budget.

WHEREAS previous resolutions dealing with this topic have been passed at the SARM convention and little or no action has been made.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby for continued efforts towards improving legislation that would provide effective collection of municipal oil and gas taxes.

Resolution Background:

As natural gas is sold in a pool we were unable to ascertain who was purchasing the natural gas. If we would have been able to obtain this, we would have sought payment from the purchaser as allowed by Legislation. The company was forced into bankruptcy by the province and the municipalities involved. We stand in line for the proceeds of the disposal and as the province is also owed significant amounts, we will not likely see much if any of the 2 million now accumulated taxes owed to us. We are simply asking that this matter not be dropped without suitable tax collection methods being developed.

RM of Milton No. 292 and RM of Antelope Park No. 322

Section 317 of *The Municipalities Act* does not provide municipalities enough options to collect oil and gas tax arrears. Any wells that are not producing cannot have the taxes collected using Section 317. If a company declares bankruptcy, the municipalities become a creditor in a long list of creditors with a strong possibility of never collecting the taxes. Once a well enters the orphan well program, the municipality cannot collect any oil and gas tax arrears at all. Additional measures need to be added to legislation to allow for municipalities to collect oil and gas tax arrears.

RM of Winslow No. 319

The process for tax enforcement is very effective for other property classes. Council feels that changes need to be made to legislation to enforce payment of RM taxes from the oil and gas sector for commercial taxes. This will help all SARM members with oil and gas arrears. Council is looking for more than a letter acknowledging an awareness of this situation.

13-23M | Section 293 Amendment to Remove Leased Lands from Dwelling Exemption

Rural Municipality of Invergordon No. 430

WHEREAS land values have increased significantly over the years and typical farmsteads only require the home quarter to fully exempt the house, leaving a lot of land "up for grabs" for lessees to utilize to exempt their dwelling (and those lessees may not otherwise pay taxes to the RM).

WHEREAS the current wording of Section 293 does not require the lease of agricultural land to be used for an active farming operation, only that the lease be for land that is assessed as agricultural (cultivated, pasture, natural), so leases for other uses such as bird watching or a seasonal campsite etc. could be used to exempt a dwelling.

WHEREAS presumedly, the intent of Section 293 is to provide farmers a reduction in residential taxation due to the large land mass of agricultural land in which they pay taxes on and not to provide a tax break to non-farming operations.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to amend Section 293 of *The Municipalities Act* to remove the dwelling exemption provided to a lessee of land.

Resolution Background:

Situation in our RM: Farmer sells his entire farm to corporate farm, including the house and home quarter where farmer still resides. Farmer presents a lease agreement for 2 quarters he leases back from corporate farm which fully exempts the house that farmer occupies (owned by corporate farm). The lease is for \$1.00 for full farm rights and control of said lands to farmer. It is widely known in the community that farmer is retired and not actively farming. When reviewing Section 293 it does not provide the assessor with the power to reject the lease agreement since the lease is of agricultural land. The case of fraud is a separate matter being dealt with legally, however if this loophole were to be discovered, any occupant could lease agricultural land for legitimate reasons (bird watching or a seasonal campsite) bring that lease in and receive an exemption on their dwelling. This is not the intent of Section 293 and an amendment needs to be put in to protect the tax base of a municipality.

Exemptions from taxation in rural municipalities

293(1) In this section:

(a) **“agricultural operation”**:

(i) includes the tillage of land, the production or raising of crops, dairy farming, the raising of poultry or livestock, the production of poultry products or livestock products in an unmanufactured state and any portion of the use of an operation mentioned in subclause (ii) that is determined by the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency to be a non-commercial use; but

(ii) does not include the commercial operation of seed cleaning plants, farm chemical and fertilizer outlets, grain elevators, equipment sales and service enterprises and other similar commercial operations;

(a.1) **“assessment”** and **“actual assessment”** mean taxable assessment as determined in accordance with section 197;

(b) **“land”** means land:

(i) for which the predominant potential use is cultivation, determined by the assessor as the best use that could be reasonably made of the majority of the surface area;

(ii) for which the predominant potential use is as range land or pasture land, determined by the assessor as the best use that could reasonably be made of the majority of the surface area;

- (iii) the majority of the surface area of which is not developed for any use, has been left in or is being returned permanently to its native state or cannot be used for agricultural purposes; or
 - (iv) used for any other agricultural purpose.
- (2) In addition to the exemptions provided for by section 292, the following are exempt from taxation in rural municipalities:
- (a) unoccupied buildings that are residential in nature and that are situated on land;
 - (b) buildings that are used to grow plants in an artificial environment, other than cannabis plants grown pursuant to the *Cannabis Act* (Canada);
 - (c) improvements, other than dwellings, that are used exclusively in connection with the agricultural operation that is owned or operated by the owner or lessee of the improvements;
 - (d) the portions of improvements, other than dwellings, that are:
 - (i) used partly in connection with the agricultural operation that is owned or operated by the owner or lessee of the improvements and partly for other purposes; and
 - (ii) determined by the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency to be attributable to that agricultural operation;
 - (e) a dwelling that is situated outside of an organized hamlet, hamlet or an area established pursuant to section 49.2 or clause 53(3)(i) and occupied by an owner ~~or a lessee~~ of land, to the extent of the amount of the assessment of the dwelling that does not exceed the total of the assessments of any land in the rural municipality or in any adjoining municipality that is owned ~~or leased~~ by:
 - (i) the occupant, the occupant's spouse or both of them;
 - (ii) subject to subsection (3), a partnership of which the occupant is a partner; or
 - (iii) subject to subsection (3), a corporation of which the occupant is a shareholder.
- (3) For the purposes of clause (2)(e):
- (a) the assessment of land owned ~~or leased~~ by:
 - (i) a partnership of which any person who is an occupant is a partner is deemed to be that portion of the actual assessment of the land that bears the same relationship to that actual assessment as the number of persons who are the occupants and who are partners in the partnership bears to the highest number of partners in the partnership at any time in the taxation year; or

- (ii) a corporation of which any person who is an occupant is a shareholder is deemed to be that portion of the actual assessment of the land that bears the same relationship to that actual assessment as the number of shares of the corporation held by persons who are the occupants bears to the highest number of issued shares of the corporation in the taxation year; and
- (b) if more than one dwelling described in clause (2)(e) is owned ~~or leased~~ by any of the persons mentioned in subclauses (2)(e)(i) to (iii), clause (2)(e) applies:
 - (i) if the dwellings are in the same rural municipality, only to the residence with the greater assessment; and
 - (ii) if the dwellings are in adjoining municipalities, with respect to each dwelling, only to the amount of the assessment that does not exceed the total of the assessments of any land in the rural municipality in which the dwelling is located that is owned ~~or leased~~ by one or more of those persons.
- ~~(4) A lessee is only eligible to receive the exemption provided for by clause (2)(e):~~
 - ~~(a) with respect to land leased from an owner who is not eligible to receive the exemption; and~~
 - ~~(b) with respect to land leased from an owner who is entitled to the exemption, if the owner or lessee provides to the assessor, on or before March 31 in any year, a copy of the lease and a written notice signed by the owner stating that the owner has agreed that the lessee is to receive the exemption.~~
- ~~(5) If a written notice has been provided to the assessor pursuant to clause (4)(b), the lessee continues to receive the exemption until the owner or lessee provides to the assessor a written notice, signed by the owner, rescinding or amending the previous notice on or before March 31 in the year in which the rescission or amendment is to be effective.~~
- ~~(6) If the lease provided to the assessor pursuant to clause (4)(b) is amended, the lessee shall promptly provide the assessor with a copy of the lease as amended.~~

2005, c M-36.1, s.293; 2013, c.19, s.47; 2014, c.19, s.27; 2018, c C-2.111, s.7-10; 2020, c 30, s.3-73.

14-23M | Reviews of Division Boundaries

Rural Municipality of Meadow Lake No. 588

WHEREAS Section 49.1(2) of *The Municipalities Act* states that "The council shall establish a policy setting out the manner in which it will review the divisions of the rural municipality within 2 years of the coming into force of this section for the purpose of providing that each division of the rural municipality has, as nearly as is reasonably practicable, the same population or number of voters."

WHEREAS the RM of Meadow Lake has had no issues with operating under the status quo that has each division boundary allocated based on approximate geographic size. The review of each division's population, census taking, and subsequent alteration of boundaries and map changes would be costly and unwarranted.

WHEREAS most RM services are provided on a regional basis and not necessarily based on population density and the amendments to The Act were created because of a few special situations. Also, Section 49(4) of The Act states that "The minister may, by order, alter the boundaries of, eliminate, or create one or more divisions or renumber the divisions in a rural municipality," at any time.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to amend *The Municipalities Act* to make division boundary changes within an RM a discretionary decision by council or based on a request of the Minister of Government Relations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that division boundary changes be based on optional considerations such as geographic area instead of only population.

Resolution Background:

The council of the RM of Meadow Lake is concerned that in the future district boundaries will have to be amended because of population shifts, incurring extra costs and confusion for the voters.

The resolution would remove the requirements that RM's must review their division boundaries. The RM has established a minimum population threshold for each division that must be met before action is taken.

The amendment to the Act would not make it mandatory to address division boundaries and would allow RM's to keep the status quo unless the minister intervenes.

15-23M | Development within the Flood Way

Rural Municipality of Weyburn No. 67

WHEREAS the Statements of Provincial Interest are prohibited to develop within the flood way.

WHEREAS criteria for developers and landowners who own property located within the flood way where they can still have value in a property.

WHEREAS insurance and liability claims for development within the floodway shall be the responsibility of the landowner and insurer.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to allow developments to happen on prime land to continue to foster community growth and expansion regardless of it being in the flood way.

Resolution Background:

The RM of Weyburn jointly with the City of Weyburn recently received flood mapping from WSA which identified lands along the primary corridors that have been deemed flood way with the map models and according to the Statements of Provincial Interest prohibit development.

Many communities are centered along water bodies and water courses with increasing number of lots within or surrounding their communities that can not be developed.

16-23M | Community Planning

Rural Municipality of Weyburn No. 67

WHEREAS there are inconsistent policy and decisions and extensive staff turnaround time within the Community Planning Branch with the Ministry of Government Relations.

WHEREAS the changes are resulting in increased demands on municipal staff to fulfill their requirements.

WHEREAS this has been an ongoing problem for many years and no changes have been made.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM request the Ministry of Government Relations - Community Planning be evaluated and reconstructed to better serve municipalities.

Resolution Background:

The ongoing challenges and no changes are made within the department. As the Provincial Approving Authority for municipalities, they should be held accountable.

The RM of Weyburn has met with the MLA and Ministers responsible for different government agencies expressing concerns and that an evaluation and restructure is required.

**17-23M | Municipal Audit Fee Guide
Rural Municipality of Weyburn No. 67**

WHEREAS under *The Municipalities Act* each municipality is required to have and submit a copy of the audited financial statement and auditors report to Government Relations.

WHEREAS municipal audits have become a large budgetary item.

WHEREAS there are currently no guidelines or restrictions within the province for the cost of municipal audits.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to implement a fee guide, based on a specific criterion, to be used by all auditors when charging municipal audits.

Resolution Background:

The rising costs of municipal audits for the municipality and continually seeing the rates increasing at an uncontrolled and unknown rate.

This would assist other municipalities in budgeting by knowing what their annual audit will cost if they fit within the specific criteria for the year and will eliminate the large increases in the cost of the services.

The intended outcome is to create a provincial fee schedule outlining what auditors can charge municipalities based on specific criteria.

**18-23M | Recall Act for Saskatchewan
Rural Municipality of Auvergne No. 76**

WHEREAS there is currently no Recall Act for Saskatchewan.

WHEREAS this legislation could allow Saskatchewan residents to initiate a process that could lead to removing and replacing elected officials including MLA's, municipal officials, and school trustees.

WHEREAS this would allow a way for elected officials to be held accountable throughout their term and not just during elections.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to establish a Recall Act for Saskatchewan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Recall Act would cover all elected positions on any board of any organization where the members are elected.

Resolution Background:

There have been many challenges with rural municipal councils, city councils as well as school boards or other elected boards. There is no way to make a change to these positions outside of an election or some very serious gross misconduct and even then, it can be very challenging. When individuals engage in these type of actions, it can cause the boards to focus their attention on dealing with the individual(s) causing the problems. This can include spending a lot of time, energy and sometimes even finances in trying to conduct the proper business the elected members are responsible for. When there are these types of problems with an elected member it can cause uncertainty in the ability of the entire board/council as a whole in serving the residents in the area it represents. This would give the residents and ratepayers an opportunity to make the changes they want to see in a more timely manner, outside of an election year.

Transport and Infrastructure Canada

19-23M | Adding Fire Halls to Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP)

Rural Municipality of Lumsden No. 189

WHEREAS investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funding exists to help municipalities build strong, dynamic, and inclusive communities as well as ensuring Canadian families have access to modern, reliable services that improve their quality of life.

WHEREAS growing communities put increased demands on local fire departments who then require significant capital investments to ensure the safety of the growing community.

WHEREAS increased standards for construction and capital costs have drastically inflated the costs of new fire halls.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the federal government to add fire halls to the list of approved structures under the ICIP application form.

Resolution Background:

The RM of Lumsden No. 189 is submitting this resolution to bring attention to a missing component of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP). Growing communities require fire services and the ICIP does not provide funding for expanding existing or building new fire halls.

SaskPower

20-23M | SaskPower Poles

Rural Municipality of Emerald No. 277

WHEREAS the provincial rural electric grid system was put in place in the 1950s and 60s and it has served rural Saskatchewan very well.

WHEREAS the farming equipment in use 50 or 60 years ago was vastly different from the equipment of today, which is much wider and higher contributing to serious safety issues near this infrastructure.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM work with SaskPower to develop an action plan to revitalize the electrical grid to meet today's needs and into the future by using taller power poles and moving power lines to the property line adjacent to roads as opposed to in the fields.

Resolution Background:

The Rural Municipality of Emerald is concerned with the safety of all ratepayers when performing their agricultural duties around SaskPower lines. This affects the entire agricultural sector of the province. Producers can complete their task safely and efficiently if these lines are removed from the fields. This RM has approved all lines that are removed from the field and put on the edge of their property. The result will be to get all powerlines out of the field and onto the fence line.

21-23M | Recreation Facilities Power Costs

Rural Municipality of Argyle No. 1, Rural Municipality of Coalfields No. 4, Rural Municipality of Reciprocity No. 32, Rural Municipality of Moose Creek No. 33 (submitting RM), Rural Municipality of Browning No. 34

WHEREAS the cost of running a recreational facility is growing exponentially each year.

WHEREAS recreational facilities in small communities are most often run by volunteers and fundraising revenue which is stretched thin in today's economy.

WHEREAS the imposed carbon tax added to power bills has increased by 3% in 2023 and SaskPower increased rates by 4% in September 2022 and another 4% in April 2023.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby SaskPower to reduce rates for recreational facilities run by volunteer organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to provide more funding opportunities for volunteer organizations running recreational facilities via fundraising efforts.

Resolution Background:

Most community rinks are run by a volunteer recreation board. All expenses for the rink are paid through donations, fundraising and rink fees. For the 2022/23 year, which was September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2023 the Town of Alameda Rec Board paid a total of \$23,709.32 for power in this building and carbon tax totaled \$1,267.87. The Village of Carievale Rec Board paid a total of \$18,381.73 for power for their rink and carbon tax totaled \$833.22. As you can imagine, it takes a village to keep rinks running for our children. Major fundraisers are held each year to try to cover operating expenses. Each recreational group is also expected to fundraise, not only for their own team expenses but also for rink operational costs. In today's economy, many parents and organizations are already stretched much too thin to contribute more towards our community rinks. The amount of the carbon tax charged on the power bills alone would be equivalent to a few bottle drives or soup and sandwich fundraisers. If SaskPower would reduce rates for these community buildings it would make it much easier to ensure they remain open to serve our rate payers.

Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety

22-23M | Saskatchewan Marshals Services

Rural Municipality of Elfros No. 307

WHEREAS everyone complains about the need for more RCMP in rural Saskatchewan.

WHEREAS the Commander of "F Troop" asked the Saskatchewan government to agree to increasing the compliment of RCMP members in Saskatchewan by 301 over the next 5 years.

WHEREAS currently the RCMP and city police recruitment teams are unable to fill their recruiting capacity leaving police departments in the province understaffed.

WHEREAS the new marshals service will do nothing to increase the number of police in the province, only change some of the current officer's roles.

WHEREAS the Province of Saskatchewan has brought this new service and cost to the citizens of this province with little to no consultation.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety to stop the implementation of the Saskatchewan Marshals Service.

Resolution Background:

The province of Saskatchewan has stated that they are creating the Marshals Service to help bolster the service of the RCMP especially in those areas where the RCMP is short staffed or overworked. What the Minister has not said, is that they will be targeting current or retired RCMP officers (Sargent or higher) to fill in the "top brass" of the Marshals Service, but also targeting the 3 to 5 year service RCMP Constables to fill in the "boots on the ground" staff of this new service. This move will add more to the staff shortages that already exist within the detachments around the province.

Currently in rural Saskatchewan, we pay approximately 10% of the cost of the RCMP, the rest of the cost is covered by the Federal Government. Therefore, the 90% is covered by the other 34 million Canadians. The cost of this Marshals Service will be covered 100% by the 1.2 million Saskatchewanians. Would it not make more sense to put this money into the RCMP if they really want to add more policing services to certain areas of the province?

Ministry of Energy and Resources

23-23M | Testing Water Wells in Proximity to Oil and Gas Well Drilling

Rural Municipality of Britannia No. 502

WHEREAS there are currently no legislative requirements for oil and gas companies to test residential water wells in proximity to oil and gas well drilling sites.

WHEREAS when oil is extracted deep from the earth's surface, it must pass through aquifers closer to ground level. In most cases, there is a layer of cement around the well's casing to prevent leaking, but sometimes the casing is not always intact and carcinogens can seep into the water supply.

WHEREAS there are previous instances where personal water wells have been contaminated by compounds that originate from oil and gas wells.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the Ministry of Energy and Resources to create mandatory regulations for oil and gas companies to test personal water wells within 1.6 kilometers of a proposed oil and gas well, to determine a base line of the quality of the water well, prior to the oil or gas company drilling the new well.

Resolution Background:

The RM of Britannia No. 502 has received comments from ratepayers about their personal water well having reduced quality since an oil or gas well had been drilled in proximity to the personal water well. It is hard to determine if the quality of water was because of an oil or gas well or not because there was no baseline well tests taken before the oil or gas well was drilled.

The intention of this resolution is to allow rural municipal ratepayers, that have water wells close to a new oil or gas well the ability to have their water wells monitored for carcinogens. Currently oil and gas companies are normally only discussing operations with the landowners that they are leasing the drilling site from.

24-23M | Oil and Gas Well License Re-Entries

Rural Municipality of Cambria No. 6 (submitting RM), Rural Municipality of Browning No. 34

WHEREAS oil and gas companies are required to apply for a new well license to re-enter an existing well and re-entries into existing wells are issued as amendments to existing well licenses.

WHEREAS the Ministry of Energy and Resources currently does not notify municipalities of the issuance of well licenses and is required to determine the issuance of well licenses on their own.

WHEREAS municipalities need to know when the Ministry of Energy and Resources authorizes well re-entries as they require the same amount of equipment and resources as drilling a new well and the municipality can ensure that well re-entries are being properly assessed.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the Ministry of Energy and Resources to introduce weekly notifications to municipalities of the issuance of well licenses, well re-entries, amendments, and cancelations of well licenses.

Resolution Background:

Municipalities have a hard time tracking well licenses as the only way to do so is to review every daily well bulletin from the Ministry of Energy and Resources. Municipalities need to know the issuance and amendments of well licenses so that they can adequately accommodate the industry. Unfortunately, this is also a disconnect between SAMA and oil and gas companies for oil and gas assessments and municipalities are currently the best resource to flag properties for re-assessment. By receiving notification of all well licenses in their boundaries, municipalities can adequately accommodate industry, ensure fair assessment, and bill for well licenses accordingly.

25-23M | Rural Municipal Royalty Resource Fund

Rural Municipality of Weyburn No. 67

WHEREAS Saskatchewan has abundant resources whether they be natural, mineral, oil, gas, coal, rare earth elements, potash, fertilizers, timber, or renewable resources.

WHEREAS the majority, if not all these resources are found, extracted, harvested, or drilled for in the rural municipalities (RMs) of the province and/or on crown lands.

WHEREAS the Federal Equalization Formula has been called into question and challenged repeatedly by the current provincial government as funds and wealth transfer from the province to Ottawa. Similarly, these funds and the wealth from these resources, transfer royalties to the province from rural Saskatchewan to the general revenues of the province with little to no accounting of how much of it proportionately comes back to rural Saskatchewan in the way of services, funding, or support mechanisms.

WHEREAS RMs are increasingly faced with significant capital demands and costs on infrastructure upgrades, bridge construction and repairs, technology needs, road upgrades, engineering costs and capacity to deliver services in our RMs as well as community builds and projects within our greater communities. Further, many RMs lack the potential for any royalty revenue, property tax potential or wealth generation from the resource sector directly.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to pass legislation returning 10% of any resource royalty dollars (or equivalent value & credit like green credits generated to SaskPower) generated or extracted from provincial royalties within an RM directly back to the RM annually from where the royalty revenues were generated from said resource royalties including all mines and minerals, as well as natural and renewable resources.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to include in that legislation an additional 10% of those resource royalty dollars (or equivalent value & credit like green credits generated to SaskPower) generated or extracted from provincial royalties within an RM go directly into a Rural Municipal Royalty Resource Fund that is in then split proportionately amongst all the RMs of the province of Saskatchewan on an annual basis.

Resolution Background:

Significant dollars are leaving rural Saskatchewan in the way of royalties to the government, and this is a way of creating a transparent process to see some of these funds come back to rural communities to be utilized towards their needs.

This resolution would benefit every RM in the province of Saskatchewan with increased funding.

We are advocating for all RM's of Saskatchewan with the structure of this resolution including those without royalty or resource revenues.

The intended outcome is to see a portion of money and resources leaving rural Saskatchewan, returned to rural Saskatchewan to help build capacity and resources back in rural areas.