

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.

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).

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.

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.

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.

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*.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 complement 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.

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.

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.

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.