

MATTERS PERTAINING TO SARM

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

1-24M | Changes to Resolution Voting Rural Municipality of Elfros No. 307

WHEREAS all resolutions presented at SARM annual and midterm conventions serve as advisory recommendations to the board.

WHEREAS given the volume of resolutions passed at each general meeting, it is essential for the board and the organization to prioritize these resolutions to effectively advocate on behalf of its membership.

WHEREAS this prioritization process can be enhanced by refining the voting threshold, ensuring that resolutions reflect a stronger consensus.

BE IT RESOLVED that the minimum requirement for passing any resolution be raised from a simple majority of 51% to a two-thirds (66.7%) majority.

Resolution Background:

As stated above, the board and staff of the organization do not have the time to deal with all of the resolutions passed at any one convention. Although the majority of the resolutions pass with more than a 2/3 majority, all of the passed resolutions are sent to the government departments as a forewarning of topics of discussion in the coming months. The board and staff will still cull a number of the resolutions based on urgency of the topic, and total support for that resolution. This change will just start the culling process on the floor of the meeting, instead of on the desk of the policy manager.

2-24M | Limits to Time Served as SARM President and Vice President Rural Municipality of Elfros No. 307

WHEREAS regular leadership renewal introduces excitement, fresh ideas, new energy, and enhanced knowledge to the membership, the board, and the executive positions of president and vice president.

WHEREAS establishing term limits encourages organizational growth by providing opportunities for emerging leaders to contribute and serve in executive roles.

BE IT RESOLVED that the position of SARM president and vice president be limited to a maximum of three consecutive two-year terms.

Resolution Background:

When a person has been in an individual office for a long time they may get set in their ways. By bringing terms to the top two executive positions on the board we have the opportunity to help the board grow. Knowing that those positions will be open in six years or less and for somebody to take up this position they must work on their game. It also brings new ideas, relationships, knowledge and energy to the positions every few years. It is good for the organization, good for the board, and good for the members.

3-24M | Agriculture and Economy Committee Representative Rural Municipality of Elfros No. 307

WHEREAS the role of a SARM director is highly demanding, requiring a significant time commitment that can be challenging for many councillors and producers who are already dedicated to managing their farms and supporting their communities.

WHEREAS this time constraint may limit the board's ability to benefit from the valuable insights and expertise of these individuals on agricultural and economic policies.

BE IT RESOLVED that the SARM board consider appointing at least two RM representatives to the Agriculture and Economy Committee to ensure a broader range of perspectives and expertise is included.

Resolution Background:

This addition of six district representation to the Resolutions Committee has led to many positive changes to the resolutions process and to the quality of resolutions coming to SARM conventions. We feel that if SARM really wants to make further inroads into the ag and economy policy debates, it needs to have more input to this discussion than just the appointed directors of the board to this committee. These appointed representatives will have new ideas, knowledge, relationships, policy experience and a different kind of energy that will bring a new dynamic to this committee.

4-24M | Resolution Process Refinement Rural Municipality of Mariposa No. 350

WHEREAS the resolution portion of convention is a crucial part of lobbying provincial government and calling to action the goals and direction of the SARM membership.

WHEREAS the resolution portion of convention is a critically important part of both our midterm and annual conventions and should be well organized to ensure efficacy.

WHEREAS the resolution committee is the body who intakes and reviews the resolutions and therefore fully understands the context of submitted resolutions.

BE IT RESOLVED the chair of the resolution committee should be the moderator of the resolution portion of the SARM conventions.

Resolution Background:

The resolution committee is more knowledgeable about the submitted resolutions and thus can facilitate the discussion with fluidity and greater understanding.

MUNICIPAL IN NATURE

Ministry of Government Relations

Postponed from 2024 SARM Annual Convention

5-24M/24-24A | Administrative Best Practices Manual

Rural Municipality of Mount Hope No. 279, Rural Municipality of Montrose No. 315, Rural Municipality of Viscount No. 341, Rural Municipality of Vanscoy No. 345, Rural Municipality of St. Peter No. 369, Rural Municipality of Lake Lenore No. 399, Rural Municipality of Hoodoo No. 401, Rural Municipality of Rosthern No. 403, Rural Municipality of Invergordon No. 430 (submitting RM), Rural Municipality of St. Louis No. 431, Rural Municipality of Birch Hills No. 460, District of Lakeland No. 521, Rural Municipality of Big River No. 555

WHEREAS higher demands are being placed on administrators year over year leaving less time for mentors to be able to address every detail of the job. A lot of tasks are done "how it's always been done" or not as efficient as possible ("re-inventing the wheel") and furthermore, there is currently no on-boarding protocol established for administrators in a new office.

WHEREAS administrators (both rural and urban) are subject to professional certification requirements which include office inspections of various documentation and procedures by their respective association's Board of Examiners and the interpretation of the particular inspector on what is considered to be best practice varies.

WHEREAS matters to be included in the Administrative Best Practices Manual would be on-boarding protocol, minutes, bylaws, bylaw registry, resolution requirements, financial statements, general ledgers, accounts payable, budgets, insurance required, basic asset management, provincial and federal requirements/filings and assessment and taxation rolls.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM see to the creation of an Administrative Best Practices Manual for utilization by both rural and urban municipal administrators, prepared in conjunction with SUMA, UMAAS and RMAA (and their respective Board of Examiners), Ministry of Government Relations and legal departments.

Resolution Background:

Administrators of the Rural Municipal Administrator's Association (RMAA) Division 5 applied to the RMAA Board for the creation of an Administrative Best Practices Manual – one that could be utilized in both rural and urban settings as a lot of work done is very similar from office to office. RMAA did not approve the request as they indicated available resources were deemed to be sufficient, and if any manual were to be created, it should be done by Government Relations (i.e. legislation based). The request for a manual would be beyond legislated requirements but would encompass as much as possible on the role of administrator. This would benefit all municipal councils in operational efficiency, transitions of new administrators, confidence of legislative compliance and an overall sense of governing excellence. We would recommend SARM and SUMA jointly apply for Targeted Sector Support funding for the creation of the manual and the 25% balance could be charged to all municipalities. The intended outcome would be reduced administrator turnover and an increase in the available support and resources in administering a municipality.

Update:

Letter from RMAA's Executive Director to SARM's Executive Director dated May 23, 2024.

Further to your letter of April 4, 2024, regarding resolution 24-24A Administrative Best Practices Manual, please be advised that this resolution was submitted by a member for consideration at our convention. During the resolution session members had the opportunity to be heard and when presented with the question voted overwhelmingly against, thus defeating the resolution.

Given this direction from the members, the RMAA executive wishes to advise SARM that the majority of our membership opposes the resolution put forth to SARM. If you would like clarification or additional background please contact me and I would be happy to provide further details.

6-24M | Wind Turbine Design Constraints

Rural Municipality of Weyburn No. 67

WHEREAS municipalities do not have industry professionals on staff to be advising council what constraints should be in zoning bylaws.

WHEREAS elected officials should not be responsible for setting restrictions where there could be potential health concerns.

WHEREAS these projects are stemming from provincial and federal governments to advance renewable energy.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to have provincial standards and regulations in place for wind turbine design constraints including but not limited to setbacks from residence, other industries, property lines and height restrictions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if the provincial government is not willing to introduce standards and regulations for wind turbines then a moratorium be implemented on wind projects in the province until there are regulations for municipalities to follow.

Resolution Background:

The RM of Weyburn recently received an application to amend the current zoning bylaw for a potential wind project in the RM. There are multiple wind projects being proposed in the province. Provincial regulations would give municipalities a guide and consistency on all projects. The RM of Weyburn has faced opposition from ratepayers and community members on this project. Provincial standards in place would assist council with a bylaw amendment and not make a decision based on personal opinion.

7-24M | Effective Tax Rate (ETR)

Rural Municipality of Eye Hill No. 382, Rural Municipality of Senlac No. 411, Rural Municipality of Turtle River No. 469, Rural Municipality of Mervin No. 499 (submitting RM), Rural Municipality of Payton No. 470, Rural Municipality of Eldon No. 471

WHEREAS the local tax tools limit, in effect for the 2023 property taxation year, sets the ratio between the highest ETR and the lowest ETR of any property class to be no more than 7:1.

WHEREAS each municipality is required to provide quality levels of services to our ratepayers, and some property classes (Commercial: Industrial/Resource) receive higher levels of services to promote industry competitiveness and growth.

WHEREAS the implementation of a 7:1 ratio impacts individual property classes significantly, resulting in an evaluation of service provision to maintain taxation fairness in the interest of protecting Saskatchewan's plan for growth.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to remove the effective tax ratio and support each municipality to administer their tax tools that best fit each unique community and the diversity within.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if the 7:1 effective tax ratio continues, that all rural municipalities are given the same extension time frame for compliance.

Resolution Background:

The RM of Mervin No. 499 was given a 2-year extension to adhere to the provincially mandated ETR. Effective 2023, a limit of 7:1 effective tax ratio was placed on local tax tools; a further ratio reduction from the 9:1 in 2014. Rural municipal councils in Saskatchewan have experienced ratepayer dissatisfaction on the provincially mandated ratio. Commercial (Industrial) property classes require municipalities to address many infrastructure deficits adjacent to their improvements to align with Saskatchewan's Growth Plan. The increased costs to maintain the access for the Commercial (Industrial) property classes are impacting the service provision to the agricultural and residential property classes, of whom are equally important. These increased costs are creating inequity between the property classes.

8-24M | Farm Building and Construction Standards

Rural Municipality of North Battleford No. 437

WHEREAS the Province of Saskatchewan revised the definition of "Farm Buildings" from the National Building Code of Canada, in which the definition is vague and not prescriptively related to a farmer.

WHEREAS the scale of the farming operation has no bearing in the qualification of a "Farm Building", whether it is 1 animal or 10,000 animals the qualification is the same.

WHEREAS it is a difficult task for RM's to confidently apply and enforce Building Standards to any building within an RM as anyone could lay claim to land used for a farming operation.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to have the definition of "Farm Building" include the requirement to qualify as a farmer by holding a valid "Farm Fuel Tax Exemption Certificate" or something prescriptive and similar in evaluating a previously qualified farmer.

Resolution Background:

Every RM is required to administer the Construction Codes Act within their RM, the definition of "farm building" is vague and creates inconsistencies in the application of exemptions. The RM of North Battleford building official is currently waiting for a response from Building Standards on a Building Bylaw alteration to provide clarification. Using the Farm Fuel Tax Exemption as a qualifier for a farmer and farm buildings creates a black and white process where someone should already have the information in place and not hold up development and construction.

9-24M | Energy Code Requirement

Rural Municipality of North Battleford No. 437

WHEREAS the Government of Saskatchewan has implemented additional requirements regarding energy design for new construction within the province above and beyond the based requirements of the National Building Code and National Energy Code of Canada.

WHEREAS Saskatchewan is one of the only provinces in the country that requires additional tier requirements for energy standards, which moves from Tier 2 to Tier 3 in 2025.

WHEREAS the addition of higher tiers of energy standards creates additional red tape, additional costs to builders and roadblocks in the timeline of construction approval.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to remove additional red tape and costs to construction by reverting back to the base Tier 1 requirements for energy standards and come in-line with neighboring provinces.

Resolution Background:

The additional requirements for Tier 2, and soon to be Tier 3 energy standards applies to all construction in the province. Every RM, as of January 1, 2024, is required to have an appointed Building Official and regulate construction in regards to the Construction Codes Act. As this is provincial jurisdiction, a municipality is not permitted to do less than the adopted minimum standards. Having the province revert back to the baseline, Tier 1 Energy Code requirements will place Saskatchewan in line with neighboring provinces and requires very minimal design to meet. A typical draftsman can provide this information and Energy Modeler being required.

Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety

10-24M | Emergency Planning Act

Rural Municipality of Meadow Lake No. 588

WHEREAS the Emergency Planning Act, 1989 requires every municipality regardless of size to establish an Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) and appoint a local Emergency Measures Co-ordinator.

WHEREAS this has been a long-standing unrealistic expectation of smaller rural municipalities who do not have the staffing to accomplish this or require anyone to fill the position on a full time basis.

BE IT RESOLVED the province and SARM investigate the possibility of appointing one Regional EMO Coordinator for each SARM Division that can be cost shared by the participating Municipalities within that Division.

Resolution Background:

The current legislation needs to be changed. There are very few municipalities who can afford or justify having someone in this full-time position. A Regional EMO Coordinator that is cost shared would make the regulations more cost effective and functional.

Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure

11-24M | Traffic Lights 9th Ave NW + Highway 1

Rural Municipality of Baidon No. 131, Rural Municipality of Hillsborough No. 132, Rural Municipality of Moose Jaw No. 161 (submitting RM)

WHEREAS the intersection at the corner of Highway #1 and 9th Ave NW in the City of Moose Jaw, is considered a high-risk intersection by the Ministry of Highways yet no additional preventative measures have been introduced, such as traffic lights, due to the intersection being located on a major highway.

WHEREAS there is and has been several accidents and close calls at this intersection, due to the confusion caused at this intersection with the north service road and impatient drivers getting caught up in long lines either attempting to cross 4 lanes or turning onto oncoming traffic.

WHEREAS while there are long term goals for this intersection by the Ministry possibly within 10-15 years, there is no short-term solution to address the traffic safety concerns.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure to set aside funding for the immediate plans to install traffic lights at the intersection of Highway #1 and 9th Ave NW within the City of Moose Jaw within a 2-year time frame until a more permanent and viable solution can be implemented.

Resolution Background:

While we identify that this intersection is within the City of Moose Jaw, it is important to understand that this very busy intersection impacts both rural and urban property owners. The Ministry of Highways have deemed this intersection as high risk and will not consider additional development that could see an increase in traffic.

Other major centers such as Brandon and Medicine Hat have traffic lights along Highway #1, without causing major delays in the traffic network or reports of increased accidents since incorporating the lights. The RM of Moose Jaw is seeking member support to lobby the Ministry of Highways to provide the immediate funding for traffic lights at this intersection as a temporary solution until a more permanent solution can be determined over the next 10-15 years. For the safety of the residents in the rural and urban areas, we appreciate your support of this resolution.

12-24M | Highways Ditch Mowing Rural Municipality of Manitou Lake No. 442

WHEREAS uncontrolled vegetation growth in ditches adjacent to provincial highways reduces the visibility of wildlife approaching the highway.

WHEREAS improved wildlife visibility may result in fewer accidents, fewer injuries, reduced costs to SGI, and improved safety for motorists.

WHEREAS SGI statistics indicate Animal Action (Wildlife) as the highest contributing factor to collisions with 23.7% in 2021 and 18.4% in 2022 of all collisions caused by wildlife.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the Ministry of Highways to establish a policy of an annual 10 metre minimum cut with a 4-year rotation of a full cut for all highways other than four-lane highways.

Resolution Background:

Tall grass and other vegetation along the roadside hides animals approaching the roadway. This decreases the time a driver has to stop and increases the chance of a collision.

Current Highways Mowing Program:

FIRST CUT

Includes all high traffic and some secondary provincial highways:

- Mowing occurs between June 7 and July 15
- Receives a shoulder cut of 4.0 m immediately adjacent to the road surface

SECOND CUT

Includes four-lane highways and all other provincial highways:

- Mowing occurs between July 15 and October 15
- All four-lane highways will receive a full-width cut
- High Traffic two-lane highways will receive a 12m cut
- Secondary highways will receive an 8 m cut
- A 4 m wide strip will be mowed adjacent to all other highways with additional mowing as required to ensure visibility and weed control

The overgrown vegetation also traps snow and creates drifts on the highway which can be dangerous.

Ministry of Education

13-24M | First Aid & CPR Training

Rural Municipality of North Battleford No. 437

WHEREAS Saskatchewan ambulance wait times vary greatly; especially for those outside the urban centres.

WHEREAS the first few minutes after an accident or incident are critical to a person's survivability.

WHEREAS first aid and CPR training have shown to be of great value and should be learned from a young age and kept up to date as required.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health to have first aid and CPR training as part of the high school curriculum so that every student learns this very important life skill before they seek employment where it is a prerequisite or before they come across an individual that may require it.

Resolution Background:

Emergencies can arise at any place, any time. Having proper CPR and first aid training would provide young adults with the necessary skills to know what to do in an emergency situation, including those that are life threatening. This training would be crucial to providing much needed care to the victim until professional medical help/responders arrive to the scene.

Ministry of Environment & Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport

14-24M | Construction Delays

Rural Municipality of Hillsdale No. 440

WHEREAS municipalities are required to submit Aquatic Habitat Protection Permit, Environmental Linear Project Proposal, and Species Detection Survey Permit to the Ministry of Environment.

WHEREAS municipalities are required to submit the Heritage Resource Request for Project Review to Heritage Conservation branch.

WHEREAS municipalities are restricted within the construction season to disturb trees and nesting areas due to these permits and regulations.

WHEREAS municipalities are constructing and upgrading roads for the greater good of the economic future of the province.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport to provide funding to municipalities to cover increased costs for heritage studies and construction delays due to sensitive species.

Resolution Background:

For the past four years, the Rural Municipality of Hillsdale No. 440 have experienced significant delays in the construction of roads due to an abundance of frogs, plants and birds deemed as protected in our area. These delays have noticeable costs to our municipality as well as the contractors. Furthermore, we are required to do a heritage study of the land adjacent to the right of way of each project. This is an unnecessary expense for our ratepayers especially when the construction site is next to known cultivated or broke land. We recommend that the Heritage Conservation Branch request an evaluation from each municipality indicating arable and non-arable lands so the Heritage Sensitivity Screening Report can be updated, saving time and money on construction costs.

SaskPower and/or SaskEnergy

15-24M | SaskPower Rates for Municipal Rink Facilities

Rural Municipality of Silverwood No. 123, Rural Municipality of Willowdale No. 153 (submitting RMs)

WHEREAS skating and curling rinks in small communities throughout Saskatchewan are an essential part of community life.

WHEREAS balancing the costs to operate rink facilities while charging fees that most people can afford is difficult for communities and the current Rink Affordability Grant covers only a small fraction of the costs associated with operating these rinks.

WHEREAS SaskPower charges rink facilities their Business Standard rate for electricity, which is designed for profit, and puts an unfair burden on municipal owned rink facilities which are not-for-profit.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby SaskPower and the Minister Responsible for SaskPower to recognize the not-for-profit nature of municipal rinks and the value that they provide by offering a reduced electrical rate for all municipal-owned rink facilities.

Resolution Background:

Rinks in every community are struggling with huge utility bills and large operating losses. The town that is the closest community with a rink to our R.M. has approached our council multiple times about contributing more to their rink financially as it is losing hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. When looking at the financial statement the power costs are a huge part of these costs and becoming a burden. This issue has been brought to attention by SUMA in the past, most recently by a resolution back in 2020, and there have been resolutions at SARM conventions about the demand charges for rinks previously, but our council felt the need to keep pursuing this issue and to bring it to the forefront once again. The only real source of income for rinks are the fees that are charged to users and most of those users are youth organizations. Charging higher fees to the organizations just results in parents having to pay more fees, which are already hard to afford for many families.

16-24M | SaskPower & SaskEnergy to Lower or Subsidize Costs for Rural Residential Service Connections

Rural Municipality of Britannia No. 502

WHEREAS the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation has determined that there is a housing crisis/shortage in Canada.

WHEREAS municipalities across Canada have been encouraged to promote residential development through changes to policy and by accessing provincial/federal grant funding created to help solve the housing shortage.

WHEREAS individuals in rural Saskatchewan who receive all required permits for residential development from their municipalities are required to work with SaskPower and/or SaskEnergy to coordinate new service connections for their new homes.

WHEREAS the costs for these potential developers/homeowners to provide/install power and gas services to new rural residences in Saskatchewan is often cost prohibitive and detrimental to needed residential development.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby SaskPower and SaskEnergy to subsidize or lower the costs for service connections to new rural residences until the housing crisis/shortage in Canada has been resolved.

Resolution Background:

There is currently a housing shortage in Canada (<https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/professionals/housing-markets-data-and-research/housing-research/research-reports/accelerate-supply/housing-shortages-canada-updating-how-much-we-need-by-2030>) which is affecting rural and urban communities alike (<https://www.municipalworld.com/feature-story/small-towns-feeling-housing-crisis/>). However, due to smaller populations, rural communities are mostly shut out from federal and provincial grant programs aimed at accelerating residential development. For the most part, the only way rural communities can currently help the housing crisis is by ensuring their bylaws promote residential development.

And, while RM's across Saskatchewan are doing their part to help ease the housing crisis by ensuring their Official Community Plan's, Zoning Bylaws, and Building Bylaws are up to date and encouraging residential development, the cost to build is still very high. Unfortunately, there isn't much that RM's can do to subsidize development costs on their own, without the federal/provincial grants available to larger population centers.

In place of the federal/provincial housing funds targeted at urban centres, the RM of Britannia would like to see crown corporations in Saskatchewan do their part to help promote private residential development in rural Saskatchewan. We are therefore requesting that SARM lobby SaskPower and SaskEnergy to either lower or subsidize the cost for new residential service connections for rural customers across Saskatchewan, at least until the housing crisis has been resolved.

Rural Saskatchewan residents are in a unique position where their land is their livelihood – if the cost of building, housing is prohibitive, they do not have the opportunity or luxury to pick up and move to another location. Working on a family farm or establishing a new operation comes with its own challenges and stresses – having a roof over one's head and a place to call home shouldn't be one of them.

IMPACTING THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

Federal Minister of Finance

17-24M | Capital Gains Inclusion Rate

Rural Municipality of Excelsior No. 166

WHEREAS in the 2024 Federal Budget tabled April 16, 2024, the government announced changes to the capital gains inclusion rate from one half to two thirds for individuals, corporations and trusts.

WHEREAS on June 10, 2024, the government tabled legislation that brings these changes to Parliament on a stand-alone basis and not part of any other budget legislation.

WHEREAS an increase in the capital gains inclusion rate from one half of the capital gain to two thirds of the capital gain is effective for gains realized on or after June 25, 2024 and applies to the realized capital gain annual threshold of gains over \$250,000.

WHEREAS the changes to the capital gains inclusion rate raises a concern that it could lead to a reduction in productivity, investing and innovation in the agricultural sector. This change will disincentivize investors and entrepreneurship in this province and the impact will be felt across Canada.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the federal government to reconsider and rescind the changes to the capital gains inclusion rate that came into effect on June 25, 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that SARM lobby the federal government to engage in a thorough review of the long-term economic impacts of the proposed changes and consider alternative options that could help achieve their intended tax revenue goals without adversely affecting the Canadian economy and the agriculture industry.

Resolution Background:

There is a concern over the affect this change in taxation may have on investment and economic growth in our RM and in Saskatchewan.

The taxation changes affect all SARM members as it could have a negative impact in their RM and the province as a whole if investments into this province take a downward turn. This will result in less dollars for infrastructure and growth.

Our RM has not taken any steps regarding this resolution to date.

The intended outcome is to see our RM and the Province of Saskatchewan prosper.

Ministry of Agriculture

18-24M | Water Security Agency

Rural Municipality of Turtle River No. 469, Rural Municipality of Payton No. 470, Rural Municipality of Mervin No. 499 (submitting RM)

WHEREAS the Water Security Agency supports a growing economy, a healthy environment and a strong quality of life for all Saskatchewan people.

WHEREAS municipalities are additionally burdened to support public safety and there is a strong need to have personnel available who are knowledgeable about water bodies and programs available for proper stewardship in our communities.

WHEREAS the Water Security Agency is responsible for managing, administering, developing, controlling, and protecting water, watershed, and related land resources in Saskatchewan.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM collaborates with Water Security Agency and Saskatchewan Health Authority with a focus on source water protection and to define rural municipalities responsibilities and obligations as directed by the province.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that SARM lobby the provincial government to provide additional resources to increase the quality of life for all Saskatchewan people by being the best water management agency providing safe, reliable water that drives economic growth.

Resolution Background:

Any rural municipality that has a water body within their jurisdiction has an obligation to ensure public safety and that municipal objectives are met. We require adequate qualified professionals, that represent regulatory bodies, who are knowledgeable to support our municipality. Local municipalities are burdened with the costs to ensure that our ratepayers are accessing safe water bodies. Having SARM advocate on behalf of municipalities would provide concerned ratepayers with better and quicker access to information.

Saskatchewan's Growth Plan: The Next Decade of Growth 2020-2030 messages to build a better quality of life for Saskatchewan people - to build strong communities and strong families - and grow a stronger Saskatchewan now, and for the decade. The provincial government needs to recognize the provisions and resources that rural municipalities require to support their Growth Plan.

Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety

19-24M | Canada-Saskatchewan Job Grant Eligibility

Rural Municipality of Aberdeen No. 373

WHEREAS resolution 12-22A that was passed at the 2022 SARM Annual Convention requested that SARM lobby the Provincial Government to include municipalities among the eligible employers for the Canada-Saskatchewan Job Grant (CSJG) which provides eligible employers reimbursement for two-thirds of eligible training costs for their employees.

WHEREAS the response received from SGI to visit their website for more information on obtaining class 1 entry level training does not address the initial request to include municipalities among the eligible employers for the CSJG.

WHEREAS competing for workers with the private sector employers who are eligible for funding has put municipalities at a disadvantage, as private employers are able to offer training opportunities to their employees covered by the grant, whereas municipalities are unable to provide the same high costs training opportunities without causing increased financial burden upon the ratepayers of the municipality.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby the federal and provincial governments to have municipalities included in the list of eligible employers for the CSJG.

Resolution Background:

In response to difficulties recruiting qualified staff, such as class 1A drivers, the RM of Aberdeen No. 373 has explored sending employees and/or new applicants for training to fill the positions, but the costs associated with training are high and difficult to justify to ratepayers already complaining about high tax burdens. Providing municipalities access to the grant expands the pool of qualified candidates and enables the municipality to provide opportunities for growth and flexibility.

Health Canada, Pesticide Management Regulatory Agency

20-24M | Reinstate the Use of Strychnine

Rural Municipality of Winslow No. 319, Rural Municipality of Eye Hill No. 382, Rural Municipality of Round Valley No. 410, Rural Municipality of Cut Knife No. 439, Rural Municipality of Meota No. 468, Rural Municipality of Turtle River No. 469, Rural Municipality of Payton No. 470, Rural Municipality of Eldon No. 471 (submitting RM), Rural Municipality of Wilton No. 472, Rural Municipality of Mervin No. 499, Rural Municipality of Frenchman Butte No. 501, Rural Municipality of Britannia No. 502, Rural Municipality of Loon Lake No. 561, Rural Municipality of Beaver River No. 622

WHEREAS the Richardson's Ground Squirrel meets the definition of an agricultural pest under the Pest Control Products Act due to the substantial damage inflicted on crops, livestock and equipment resulting in economic losses for farmers and ranchers.

WHEREAS strychnine sale or distribution has been prohibited by federal statute since March 4, 2022.

WHEREAS there is no adequate alternative to strychnine for controlling the Richardson's Ground Squirrel population.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) to restructure the guidelines and reinstate the use of strychnine to control mass populations of Richardson's Ground Squirrel while meeting current standards for environmental protection.

Resolution Background:

Since the prohibition of strychnine, municipalities have used alternatives such as zinc phosphide and other products to assist with controlling the numbers of Richardson's Ground Squirrel. Their use has come with limited or no success. Nothing matches the effectiveness of strychnine. Mitigation measures can be employed which may include issuance of licenses to apply strychnine and fines for non-compliance.

Information Services Corporation

21-24M | Information Services Corporation – Land Registry Fees

Rural Municipality of Meeting Lake No. 466

WHEREAS Saskatchewan had the highest increase in farmland value in Canada in 2023, according to a report from Farm Credit Canada (FCC), with the increase of 15.7% from the previous year. Farmland values continue to drive to new heights.

WHEREAS Information Service Corporation (ISC) updated the Land Registry Fee Schedule, dated July 29, 2023, with some fees being new, some changes to formulas of how the fees get calculated and other costs are gradually increasing. Majority of the fees are determined by title and abstract value.

WHEREAS with the significant increase in farmland value, Land Registry Fees become excessive and adds an additional financial strain for the farmer selling and/or purchasing of farmland.

BE IT RESOLVED that SARM lobby ISC to incorporate a reasonable and fair fee schedule.

Resolution Background:

This resolution was submitted as council finds the Land Registry Fees excessive as farmland values keep increasing - as ISC goes according to title and abstract value. With a significant increase in land transfers and mortgage registration fees and the increase in farmland, its putting unnecessary, additional financial strain on farmers. Council is hoping that ISC will adjust their fees schedules to make it fair for all.

- <https://ronqmortgage.ca/isc-fee-changes-impact-on-saskatchewan-real-estate/>
- [https://skrealestatelaw.com/iscpricingchanges/#:~:text=Increases%3A,after%20transfer%20and%20after%20discharge\).](https://skrealestatelaw.com/iscpricingchanges/#:~:text=Increases%3A,after%20transfer%20and%20after%20discharge).)
- <https://www.isc.ca/SignedInHome/Fees/Pages/Fee-Changes.aspx>
- <https://company.isc.ca/news-releases/news-release-details/isc-reports-solid-start-2024>