

Subject: Resolutions

Purpose:

- To detail a procedure to be followed by member municipalities for presenting resolutions for consideration by the membership at the resolution session during the annual convention.

Preamble:

- Resolutions are formal presentations of a call for action on the part of the organization passing the resolution or on some other body, organization or government. They are, in their simplest form, written motions that are placed before a deliberative body.
- Submitting resolutions gives members the opportunity to directly influence SUMA's public policy and advocacy work.

Standing to bring resolutions:

- Any municipality that is a member in good standing with SUMA may submit resolutions.
- Each resolution must bear the official endorsement of the sponsoring municipality's council. The endorsement must include the date.

RESOLUTION CONTENT AND FORMAT

Scope of resolution content:

- A municipality sponsoring a resolution must ensure that ALL the following criteria are met:
 - Resolutions should be consistent with existing SUMA policy statements, values, and recently-approved resolutions;
 - Resolutions must address a topic of concern to all municipalities, a sub-category of urban municipalities (e.g. towns) or a substantial region of the province. Issues of a purely local interest will not be considered;
 - Resolutions claiming regional support shall demonstrate this support through a minimum of three co-sponsoring urban municipalities.
 - Resolutions must concern a direct responsibility or concern of Saskatchewan municipalities.
 - Resolutions must address issues that fall within the legislative jurisdiction of the provincial or federal government;
 - Resolutions should address one specific subject;
 - Resolutions should not address the same subject as any other resolutions passed by the SUMA membership in the past three years.

Resolution format:

- The wording should be clear and brief.
- Generalization and ambiguity should be avoided.
- Each resolution must have an appropriate short title drawn from the operative clause to identify the intent of the resolution.

- Resolutions must contain accurate references. The author of the resolution should ensure that the jurisdictional responsibility has been correctly identified (e.g. ministry or department within the Federal or Provincial Governments). When references are made within the resolution to particular legislation, the correct act and section(s) must be identified.
- Resolutions should only contain two types of clauses:
 - Descriptive clause (aka preamble) and
 - Operative clause.

Descriptive clauses / Preamble:

- These clauses are not required but are frequently used because they can be helpful in describing why a particular action is being sought.
- They are factual statements that are not subject to debate and are not voted on.
- A preamble consists of one or more clauses beginning with ‘WHEREAS’.
- A preamble should contain no more clauses than are strictly necessary.
- A preamble should contain clauses that highlight the present situation and any inadequacies that exist, and that logically lead to understanding and support for the action called for in the operative clause.

Operative clauses:

- Do not include reasons for a motion’s adoption within the motion itself. To do so may encumber the motion and weigh against its adoption since some members who approve of the proposed action may disagree with any or all of the written reasons.
- The operative clause(s) of a resolution begins with the words “THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT” and identified a specific action that follows from any preamble.
- It must clearly describe what specific action is being requested and the person or body being requested to act. (E.g. BE IT RESOLVED THAT SUMA urge/endorse/petition. . .)
- If there is an additional request for action within the same resolution, the additional request is preceded by “BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT”. Any additional clauses must be related to the original operative clause and if not, should be presented as a separate resolution.
- The operative clause is subject to debate, may be amended, and is the only portion of a resolution that is voted on.

Background information:

- If the sponsor believes that the rationale cannot be explained in a few preliminary clauses, the problem should be more fully stated in a brief memo.
- The background information should be submitted with the resolution
- Background information will be distributed to the members prior to the meeting.
- Background information will not be subject to the final vote.

RESOLUTION PROCESS

Submitting resolutions:

- A call for resolutions is issued prior to the annual convention.
- Members are encouraged to submit resolutions any time in the year but the deadline for resolutions to be considered at the Convention is the fifteenth day of November prior to the Convention.
- The sponsoring municipality must provide one electronic copy of the resolution to SUMA.
- SUMA staff will acknowledge receipt of the resolution and work with the sponsor to make any preliminary clarifications and changes that may be necessary.

Resolution Committee:

- The Resolution Committee is responsible for reviewing all resolutions received from members.
- The Resolution Committee may make minor changes to resolutions to ensure clarity and consistency.
- When a resolution is not self-explanatory and/or when adequate background information is not received, the Resolutions Committee may return the resolution to the sponsor with a request for additional information or clarification.
- The Resolutions Committee is responsible for ensuring that resolutions are compatible with existing policy statements, approved resolutions, and SUMA values.
- The Resolutions Committee may return any submitted resolutions, including late resolutions, to have deficiencies corrected prior to Board review. Deficiencies may include:
 - Failing to meet the aforementioned requirements for resolution scope or format;
 - The lack of a clear description of the rationale for the specific solution being sought;
 - The lack of a specific remedy or responsible party to take the requested action;
 - Ambiguous or contradictory language in the supportive or operative clause(s);
- The Resolutions Committee shall provide recommendations to the Board of Directors on the approval or disallowance of resolutions. They may also recommend the combination and co-sponsoring of similar resolutions.

Board Approval:

- Upon receiving the Resolutions Committee's recommendations, the Board of Directors shall review all resolutions intended for submission to each Annual General Meeting and shall refer back to the originator any resolutions deemed inappropriate, with reasons why, for redrafting, resubmission for the next SUMA convention, or withdrawal of the resolution.

Distribution of resolutions:

- Proposed resolutions must be distributed by SUMA to all member municipalities no later than 21 days prior to the Convention
- An electronic Resolutions Package shall be made for distribution and will contain:
 - A preface on the resolutions process;

- All resolutions submitted for consideration, grouped according to the topic and type of issue;
- A list of resolutions in the order in which they are printed and a sponsor index;
- Members may request a paper copy of the resolution package, should the need arise.

Late Resolutions:

- Resolutions received after the deadline will be considered late.
- Late resolutions must comply with all regular resolution requirements for content and format.
- Late resolutions will be reviewed by the Resolution Committee but only those considered to be newly emergent and urgent will be presented to the Convention as emergency resolutions.
- In order to be considered emergent and urgent, a late resolution should be accompanied by supporting documentation that demonstrates:
 - The importance of the issue or concern;
 - The reason why it could not have been submitted prior to the deadline; and
 - The official endorsement of the sponsoring municipality's Council.
- Any late resolutions not considered emergent or urgent may be held for consideration of the Board at their next regular meeting, unless the sponsor directs it to be heard at the next Convention.
- Late resolutions may be sponsored by the Board of Directors, at their discretion, for last-minute inclusion at the current convention.

Emergent and Urgent Resolutions:

- Resolutions of an urgent or emergent nature, as determined by the Resolutions Committee, will be debated only with the Board's approval.
- Urgent and emergent resolutions shall be available for discussion after regular resolutions
- Resolutions on issues or concerns that do not arise from the proceedings of the Annual General Meeting but are presented to the President after the call to order on the first day of the Convention will be considered urgent and emergent resolutions and will require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote to be placed before and adopted by the membership.

Resolutions sponsored by the Board of Directors:

- Resolutions sponsored by the Board of Directors may be introduced at any time during the Annual Convention.

Presentation of resolutions:

- The Resolutions Committee will determine the order in which resolutions are presented at the Convention.
- All speakers must be both elected officials and SUMA delegates.
- All speakers, other than the sponsor, are given two minutes to speak.

- Sponsors must be present to “second” their resolution and are limited to three minutes speaking time.
- Should a sponsor not second their resolution, the resolution is considered defeated.
- Sponsors may choose to withdraw their resolution from the floor rather than seconding it. This will be allowed without voting or debate.
- Following the remarks from the sponsor, the Resolutions Committee chair will ask for speakers opposed to the motion, or seeking amendments to the resolution, to speak.
- If an amendment is proposed:
 - the amender will be given two minutes to speak on behalf of the amendment.
 - If a speaker is opposed to the amendment, regular debate then occurs.
 - Once debate has concluded, or if there is no speaker opposed, the question is called.
 - If the amendment is successful, the amendment will be recorded, and the chair will ask for any speaker opposed to the amended resolution to speak.
- If there is no speaker opposed, then the question is called.
- If a speaker is opposed, regular debate then occurs.
- If debate has occurred, the sponsoring municipality is provided a one-minute closing remark before voting occurs.
- Resolutions which are not debated at a resolutions session because of insufficient time or lack of a quorum will be presented to the next meeting of the Board of Directors.

Voting procedures:

- Voting in all sessions shall be by show of voting credentials, unless a vote by ballot is requested by twenty-five (25) voting delegates prior to the call for the vote.
- Where there is not a ballot vote, the Chairperson of the Resolutions Session may call for a standing count on any resolution, normally prior to the call for votes against.
- In the case of a ballot vote, each ballot cast by Regina and Saskatoon delegates shall be counted as seven (7) votes.

Management of Resolutions Post-Convention:

Step 1: Categorize Resolutions

Resolutions that have been adopted by the SUMA membership will be placed within three distinct categories: Priority 1, Priority 2 and Priority 3 by the SUMA Board of Directors.

Priority 1: Priority 1 resolutions pertain to issues that have emerged recently and/or the political climate within the municipal sector and provincial government are such that action should be taken immediately with the intent of finding a solution within a short time frame. In most cases these resolutions would be files that are currently being handled by the policy staff.

Priority 2: These resolutions address issues that are important to municipalities, but do not merit the urgency of a Priority 1 resolution due to competing priorities. Many Priority 2 resolutions concern issues that are current policy files but have required more research, analysis or partnership building in order for a successful outcome to be achieved.

Priority 3: Priority 3 resolutions are not of an urgent matter and/or require further analysis, clarification or partnership building before any lobbying can occur. Resolutions that reappear year after year or concern matters that are out of the control of municipalities are placed in this category (i.e. increase nursing spots at SIAST)

Step 2: Action Plan

- An initial letter will be drafted on every resolution, outlining the intent and desired outcome. The letters will be sent to the appropriate ministers responsible for a response. Upon receipt of the minister's response the letter will be posted to the SUMA website for members to view.
- Based on the category system as proposed, resolutions will then be further dealt with, according to their classification:
 - Priority 1 - policy staff determine whether appropriate action is currently being taken to address the issue. If the issue is assigned to a policy staffer than further direction rests with that individual. If it is not an active file, then the matter will be immediately assigned and an appropriate lobbying strategy developed.
 - Priority 2 - policy staff will determine whether appropriate action is currently being taken to address the issue. If the issue is assigned to a policy staffer than further direction rests with that individual. If it is not an active file, then the matter will be immediately assigned and an appropriate lobbying strategy developed.
 - Priority 3 – as these resolutions are not considered urgent, they will be monitored by policy staff. If the issue is assigned to a policy staffer than further direction rests with that individual. If it is not an active file, then the matter will be assigned and appropriate action will be taken.

Approved by: Board of Directors

Prepared by: Policy and Communications Services

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Supersedes/New: