



A MESSAGE FROM THE President

Notes from the December Board Meeting

The SUMA Board of Directors gathered in Regina on **December 2** to discuss everything from Convention 2023 to municipal revenue sharing, the municipal election date, our governance review, and more.

Social Events at Convention 2023

During the meeting, the Board approved key details for the 2023 SUMA Convention and Tradeshow in Saskatoon, including details for our social events and education sessions.



The President's Banquet and Awards

Ceremony is a chance to celebrate municipal successes and the dedication of Saskatchewan's hardworking municipal officials. The **2023 President's Banquet and Awards Ceremony** will be one you won't want to miss as it will **include an aerial act** and end with a performance by the **band Deja Voodoo**.

We are also excited to announce the return of one of our favourite networking opportunities - the **Welcome Reception**. Unfortunately, we were forced to cancel the Welcome Reception for Convention 2022 due to COVID-19, but this year we are bringing back the event designed for networking with your municipal council, your peers, and SUMA's Board of Directors. The reception will be **held at Remai Modern** and will feature a cash bar and light appetizers. **Tickets** to both the President's Banquet and Welcome Reception are **included in your convention registration**.

With a focus on showcasing our host city and area, we also approved the **two optional excursions** that will be available on Sunday, April 16. Delegates will have an opportunity to explore **Wanuskewin Heritage Park** or tour the **Saskatoon Regional Waste Management Centre and STARS Air Ambulance hanger**. Both excursions will include light refreshments and will run concurrently with education sessions at TCU Place. The cost to participate in your choice of excursion will be **\$50 per person**. Space for the excursions will be limited, so be sure to register early when **Convention registration opens on January 16**.

The topics for education sessions have also been set. Knowledge is power, and delegates will have the opportunity to tune into sessions focused on:

- Mental health and addictions
- Treaties
- Property assessment
- Municipal economics
- Best governance practices
- Freedom of information
- Environmental wellbeing

Municipal Revenue Sharing

As advocacy is a core pillar of SUMA, the Board of Directors discussed multiple advocacy initiatives Friday, including advocacy related to municipal revenue sharing.

Per *The Municipal Grants Regulations*, the Government of Saskatchewan is required to conduct a review every five years of **Municipal Revenue Sharing** grant allocations and the amount of funding being directed to the Targeted Sector Support (TSS) Initiative. Municipal Revenue Sharing receives **0.75 per cent of provincial PST revenues**. Following an allocation to the provincial ombudsman and \$1.5 million for TSS, Saskatchewan's cities receive 47.9 per cent of the funding, 16.2 per cent is distributed to towns, villages, and resort villages, 28.5 per cent is allocated to rural municipalities, and northern municipalities receive 7.4 per cent.

As the province reviews the funding allocations, SUMA is **advocating for the funding pools to be rebalanced to better reflect where Saskatchewan's population lives, works, and plays**, while recognizing the greater cost of providing services in Saskatchewan's northern municipalities.

Municipal Election Date

While advocating the provincial government on municipal revenue sharing allocations, SUMA is **continuing to advocate for a change in the municipal election date** for Saskatchewan's cities, towns, and villages as well.

On November 17, Government Relations Minister Don McMorris announced a bill to amend *The Local Government Election Act, 2015*. The **bill includes amendments advocated for by SUMA**, including better enabling the use of voters' lists. However, the province also announced that the dates for municipal and school board elections would remain the same to "keep consistency across the province."

In the province, rural municipalities hold staggered elections, resort villages hold elections in July, and northern municipalities have the choice of three dates. We see no reason why cities could not have a May election date and towns and villages a September election date.

As the order of government closest to the people, it is vital for Saskatchewan's residents to be able to exercise their democratic right to vote in their local election. The potential for inclement weather and voter confusion with the provincial and municipal elections being so close together impacts that right.

SUMA's Governance Review

Friday's Board meeting also included **discussions on the SUMA governance review and the feedback we heard at regional meetings**.

As part of SUMA's 2021-25 strategic plan, the Board of Directors commissioned a governance review to look for more opportunities to have member voices heard, find ways to make SUMA nimbler in its decision making and response to issues, and review and adopt best practices to improve the organization's effectiveness, transparency, and accountability.

We started consultations on the review, and suggested governance model, at regional meetings earlier this fall. On Friday, we reviewed that feedback. We will be **sending out documents tomorrow outlining the governance review**, including the suggested governance model. The **documents will be sent to the main contact for each member municipality**. They will also be **available in the [member portal](#)** on SUMA's website.

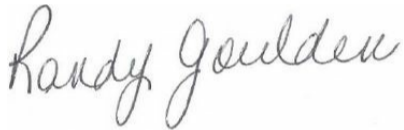
The **next consultation opportunity** will be at the **virtual sector meeting** taking place on **January 31**. The sector meeting is open to mayors, councillors, and administration from SUMA's member municipalities. In addition to the consultation, the sector meeting will include sector specific discussions and education sessions, as well as an exciting keynote. **[Registration for the sector meeting](#)** is open.

Next Meeting Date

Our **next Board of Directors meeting** will take place on **March 3**.

I hope you **have a magical holiday season!** I look forward to seeing you in 2023, hopefully online for the virtual sector meeting and then in-person April 16-19 at Convention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Randy Goulden". The signature is written in a dark grey or black ink on a light grey background.

Randy Goulden
SUMA President

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