



# President's Update

July 2, 2020

## Notes from the June Board Meeting

The Municipalities of Saskatchewan Board of Directors gathered online June 26 for a full day of virtual discussions, covering everything from Convention 2021 to advocacy for the 2020 provincial election.

The theme selected for **Convention 2021** is **Stronger Together**. With the impact of COVID-19 on large in-person events, we directed administration to explore virtual event options to ensure that we are able to come together in February 2021. As our communities have navigated the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen how it is important, possibly more than ever, to come together, sharing our successes, our challenges, and discussing solutions. This is exemplified by the COVID-19 caucus meetings, City Mayors' Caucus, and the Town, Village, and Northern Sector Meeting.

A topic of discussion at the Town, Village, and Northern Sector Meeting on June 18 was the publishing of public notices. The conversation continued at the Board of Directors meeting. At Convention 2019, members [passed a resolution](#) advocating for the provincial government to **review public notice requirements** and **expand the methods of communicating** to include the use of email, municipal websites, social media, and other electronic notifications. Over the last decade we have witnessed a continual erosion of the newspaper industry, with local newspapers, outside of major cities, becoming a thing of the past. **We need a flexible system that allows our municipalities to continue using newspapers, where it makes sense, and to engage residents in other ways, where it doesn't.** Changes that would have expanded our options for publishing public notices were removed from [Bill 194](#), the bill amending *The Cities Act*, *The Municipalities Act*, and *The Northern Municipalities Act*. See the [letter we have sent to Minister of Government Relations Lori Carr](#) explaining our concerns. We also encourage you to contact your MLA. Having the ability to publish public notices in places other than newspapers, where it makes sense, increases our ability to be accountable and transparent.

Continuing with a focus on provincial advocacy, the Board of Directors also discussed priorities for the upcoming provincial election. Municipalities of Saskatchewan is appreciative of the [Municipal Economic Enhancement Program](#) and the [fast-tracked Municipal Revenue Sharing](#) to aid municipalities during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we recognize the next few years will continue to be a challenge for municipalities. We **need assurances from the provincial government that our communities are going to have the support they need.**

Municipal elections are also approaching, with Resort Village elections scheduled for **August 29** and elections for cities, towns, and villages scheduled to follow on **November 9**. To encourage participation in municipal governance and increase understanding of what it means to be on council, **Municipalities of Saskatchewan has created Municipal Governance 101**, virtual education sessions designed for anyone who has an interest in

municipal politics or who is thinking of running for council. Municipal Governance 101: Resort Villages is taking place **July 14**. Sessions for cities, towns, villages, and northern communities are scheduled for later this summer. Visit the [events listing](#) on the Municipalities of Saskatchewan website for more information.

Our next Municipalities of Saskatchewan Board of Directors meeting will be held on **September 25**.

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