

March 7, 2019

Chair and Board  
Cariboo Regional District  
180 North 3rd Avenue, Suite D  
Williams Lake, BC V2G 2A4

Dear Chair and Board:

**Re: Provincial Response to 2018 Resolutions**

UBCM has received the Province's response to your Board resolution(s) from 2018. Please find the enclosed resolution(s) and their provincial response(s).

All responses from the Province have been posted to the UBCM web site under Resolutions & Policy.

Please feel free to contact Jamee Justason, Resolutions and Policy Analyst, if you have any questions about this process.

Tel: 604.270.8226 ext. 100 Email: [jjustason@ubcm.ca](mailto:jjustason@ubcm.ca)

Very Best Wishes,



Arjun Singh  
UBCM President

*Enclosure*

Cariboo Regional District  
File No. 400-60-01

MAR 11 2019

Referred To enrol  
Board chair

Whereas under the *Local Government Act*, municipalities are not required to conduct a by-election if a vacancy occurs after January 1st in a general election year;

And whereas under the *Local Government Act*, regional districts are required to conduct a by-election unless a vacancy occurs after June 1st in a general election year, which is expensive and unnecessary for such a short period of time:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to amend the *Local Government Act* to enable regional districts to decide whether they wish to conduct a by-election if a vacancy occurs after January 1st in a general election year.

**Convention Decision:**                      **Endorsed**

#### Provincial Response

##### ***Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing***

*Government is interested in supporting local governments seeking to improve efficiencies in governance while maintaining a fair and democratic framework. The Ministry appreciates the work of the Ad-Hoc Committee in preparing its report and recommendations on Alternate Electoral Area Directors.*

*Currently under the Local Government Act (LGA) section 54 (2), a local government may decide not to hold an election if the vacancy occurs after June 1 in the year of an election. LGA section 54 (3) provides that municipalities may determine if they will hold an election if the vacancy occurs after January 1 in the year of election if two additional conditions are met: if the vacancy is for an "at large" position (i.e. not a neighbourhood constituency); and quorum is maintained.*

*Similar to representation within a municipal neighbour constituency (which also requires an election until the June 1 deadline in a general local election year), an electoral area director represents a specific sub-area of a larger jurisdiction. The principle expressed in the legislation is that where representation is connected to that smaller, specific area, an election is required as soon as practicable. This prevents the concern of an electoral area not having an elected representative in place for as long as 10 months, if a vacancy occurred in early January in the year of an election. Enabling such a long absence also would seem out of step with one of the Committee's other recommendations to require a by-election after 6 months of an electoral area director's absence.*

*Additional analysis will be needed to better understand the desired outcomes of the Committee's report, the details and implications of its specific recommendations, and the linkages among them. Government's interest is always in finding the most targeted and effective ways to ensure that local governance is both effective and accountable.*

Whereas fighting wildfires is the responsibility of the provincial government;

And whereas local fire departments and search and rescue teams are critical in fighting large scale wildfires during a declared State of Emergency:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to enact any legislative and/or policy changes necessary to ensure that local emergency organizations that are requested to and do assist during a declared State of Emergency receive timely compensation for their time and supplies used assisting the Province in this manner.

**Convention Decision:                      Endorsed**

Provincial Response

***Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General***

*The Province appreciates the efforts of local emergency organizations that assist during a declared State of Emergency, recognizing the financial impact this mobilization can have on these organizations.*

*The Province has implemented and will continue to implement improvements for payment processes and tools to support more timely compensation. Demonstrated actions include:*

- Working with the BC Wildfire Service, a key partner in processing claims, to improve communication and payment processes, Emergency Management BC has been able to improve the claims review and payment process;*
- Following the 2017 wildfire season, Emergency Management BC's Office of the Fire Commissioner, attended the annual Local Government Financial Officers conference and provided training using best practices for the generation of reimbursement claims to the Province; and*
- Obtaining additional temporary resources to process the significant volume of claims and invoices during a disaster in order for Emergency Management BC to meet its obligation to make payment within 30 days of receipt of invoices, or proof of goods or services received.*



Whereas the purpose of the Province's Rural Dividend Fund is to support rural communities and strengthen their economies;

And whereas this goal could be achieved in a more efficient manner if local governments did not have to apply and report on each application individually, but could plan the funding for appropriate projects with a cooperative, strategic lens:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to provide a Rural Dividend allocation to local governments each year through a multi-year agreement, similar to the federal Gas Tax Fund, allowing the local government to effectively utilize the funds for local projects based on provincial criteria, and to complete the process through a simplified annual reporting structure.

**Convention Decision:**                      **Endorsed**

#### Provincial Response

##### ***Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development***

*The current application-based process for allocating funds through the Rural Dividend Program ensures that funding is provided to projects that will have the greatest impact on economic development in rural communities.*

*Adopting a formula-based allocation for local governments, similar to the model used by the federal gas tax program, would significantly reduce the impact of the Rural Dividend Program by eliminating two of the three eligible applicant groups, First Nations communities and not-for-profit organizations.*

*Additionally, a formula-based allocation model would not allow funding assistance to be prioritized for communities that identify a significant need for support, including communities impacted by the loss of a main employer or the impacts of a natural disaster (i.e. wildfire/flood).*

*A review of the Rural Dividend Program is currently being conducted to identify opportunities for continuous improvement and ensure the program meets the needs of rural stakeholders. Opportunities to improve the efficiency of how the program works with eligible applicants, including local governments, is part of this review process.*

## 2018 B144 Parity in Hospital Districts Capital Contribution

Cariboo RD

Whereas under the *Hospital District Act*, hospital districts may contribute up to 40% of capital expenses incurred by their local health authorities;

And whereas those contribution percentages should be equitable across all hospital districts;

And whereas Metro Vancouver has been relieved of their obligation to provide a contribution to hospital capital costs, shifting additional costs to the Health Authority and ultimately further impacting the ability of the Ministry of Health to fund capital projects for hospitals:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM commence discussions with the provincial government to work toward a system that creates parity in the capital contributions that hospital districts in BC provide to their local health authorities.

**Convention Decision:**                      **Endorsed**

### Provincial Response

#### **Ministry of Health**

*Regional hospital districts (RHDs) are key partners in building and maintaining local hospital infrastructure. The Hospital District Act (the Act) is a legislative framework for RHDs and their roles and responsibilities. Health authorities work closely with their RHDs to determine what level of cost sharing may be possible for specific projects within their approved capital plans and RHDs are expected to contribute 40 percent of capital project costs within their region.*

*Since 1998, Metro Vancouver residents no longer have a RHD and they pay property taxes to TransLink in accordance with the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act.*

*The Ministry of Health recognizes that regional contributions towards health capital projects are inconsistent across RHDs and vary from project to project and that the Act and its regulation need to be updated and aligned with current practices. When there is an opportunity to amend the Act, consultations with all stakeholders, including RHDs and the Union of BC Municipalities, will be part of the amendment process.*