

UMAAS UPDATE

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IN THIS ISSUE:

2015 Conference Information
"Creating Connections - Building Communities"

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President's Message

- Rodney Audette RMA, President
UMAAS

After a couple of kind reminders from our Executive Director, I am finally getting around to writing my April 2015 article. I think in my mind I am still in Punta Cana, refreshing in the hot sun, beside the pool, with the breeze coming in off the ocean, and Shauna looking at me like, "ok we are on vacation buddy" as I sit for about two hours talking municipal administration with a former municipal advisor, municipal administrator and former President of the Newfoundland Labrador Administrators Association. It was a great visit with Mr. Keith Warren from Newfoundland (although I must admit, his two weeks in Punta Cana and then next five weeks in Florida on a golf tour had me slightly jealous!)

"Networking" I called it! All the way from the Dominican Republic, was a great conversation. It was very interesting to hear about how their association was formed, really not that long ago, how municipal administrators there are educated (now they have no formal course or classes to take, just annual workshops and education sessions provided by the Association) and how much a need there is for ensuring municipal administrators have the necessary tools to function professionally for their elected employers.

Although our situation in Saskatchewan is slightly different, there were a lot of commonalities in our conversation. Mostly that being the ongoing education and training of current administrators. As well as the need to evaluate current education requirements and courses being offered for those entering into the world of municipal administration. Half a country apart and lots of similarities.

Your 2015 UMAAS Convention Committee, chaired by Ronda Heisler, has set your convention agenda and has included a lot of educational components in the program. As well there will be great key note speakers and administrator

networking opportunities. The theme this year is "60 Years of...Creating Connections-Building Communities."

Thanks to the Committee and executive members for their continued efforts on the many committees they are representing UMAAS on. SAMA Urban Advisory, SUMA Convention Planning and Services, PSAB-Tangible Capital Asset Management, Boundary Alteration and many others take up a lot of time and resources of your executive members. Their time and dedication to the Association is greatly appreciated.

With the annual convention just around the corner, I look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones, welcoming new members to the UMAAS organization. With that said, I would like to ask our current members to take a few moments, and write down in an email to myself or Rick Doleszar, suggestions on where UMAAS should be going, what issues we should be tackling on your behalf. Whether it is comments on education requirements, ongoing education/training/workshop ideas, send it our way, we do want to hear what you have to say.

Each week our offices are faced with a number of challenges and work and the first three or four months of the year are typically the busiest. Year end and audit work, assessment compiling, tax enforcement, annual operating and capital budget preparations, tax policy review and on, and on.

Remember to take a deep breath once in awhile and don't let the stresses of our profession wear on you. An extra day off for a long weekend, or additional family time will rejuvenate you and give you that added energy at the office,, Punta Cana worked for me!! Now to just get back there in a year or two!

Take care and see you all at UMAAS 2015 Saskatoon!

Vice-President of UMAAS

- Jason Chorneyko

I'm Scared - And It Is Not Even Halloween

This editorial is directed more towards the newly hired Administrators; however, there is a message for all Administrators contained within. Our profession is undergoing many changes with new people being hired on a regular basis. With these changes comes a lot of growing pains and possibly turmoil. It is our collective responsibility as an association to protect the long-term viability of our profession.

One method is protecting the long-term viability of our profession is to provide mentorship to newly hired Administrators. There is no denying that mentoring someone is a huge commitment; however it is a necessary task. As someone who came into the profession very green, and who received a lot of advice from others, I feel compelled to offer my assistance to others in need of guidance. I have, or am still in the process of, mentoring a number of Administrators. In addition I have also done three office inspections. Most of the people I encounter are very bright and hold the promise of being very good representatives of our profession; however, I have also had a couple of colossal failures. The failures are a direct result of the Councils hiring people who are ill-equipped to handle our demanding profession.

The following is a list of some of the issues, in no particular order, which I encounter as a mentor:

1) A basic understanding of accounting is mandatory. When I struggle with some accounting issues I always recall the words of my Grade 11 Accounting teacher, Peter Lao: "Debit Good - Credit Bad". Municipal accounting is not quite that basic; however, the point is to keep it simple, or at least as simple as possible. Also, being diligent and making sure your postings are correct on the initial entry will save you a lot of time and effort down the road.

One trend that I have seen in my small sampling of new Administrators is that fewer Administrators complete the year-end financial statements. In fact, it is the auditors who instruct the Administrator not to do this task. I believe this is a mistake as compiling the year-end financial statements is a good way to understand the makeup of those statements. Compiling the financial statement is also a good way to thoroughly review your general ledger.

2) Know your municipal accounting software. Posting something in your tax module is not the same as posting those entries to the general ledger. Any company which sells municipal software will also offer training. Use the

training that is offered.

3) School Liability Statements seem to pose a big problem to new Administrators, and likely some old guard Administrators. I am perplexed by the struggles new Administrators have with what I believe are straight-forward documents. As long as your general ledger and assessment rolls are correct then one is simply taking numbers from those two places and plugging them into the form.

One item that I see as contributing to the struggles with the School Liability Statements is an over reliance on the software generated form. Just because your computer spits out a form does not mean the form is correct. One must still reconcile the numbers to the general ledger.

4) The electronic spreadsheet is likely the greatest office tool created next to the computer itself. Learn how to use spreadsheets and then use them for everything. Keep track of inventory, property, tax title property, costing scenarios, project costs, and so forth. You can incorporate a spreadsheet into just about every facet of municipal administration.

Remember that is your responsibility to educate yourself. There is no magic course that is going to teach you how to be an Administrator. Every major profession has some form of mentorship/training. Doctors, lawyers, accountants, plumbers, electricians and mechanics all have programs to train their professionals. Perhaps UMAAS could use something more structured; however, this is the system we are operating under and it is up to us to make it work.

Finally, to the experienced Administrators. It is important to keep in mind that someone will eventually be taking over for you. The state in which you leave your office will have a big impact on whoever takes over for you. When I first entered the profession the main reason why I did not struggle to the same extent as what I am seeing out there is that I took over a well-organized office with lots of documentation. If I had taken over an office in disarray then my struggles would likely have been similar to what I am seeing out there with new Administrators.

Good luck to all new Administrators entering the profession. Let us all do our part to insure a secure and sustainable profession.

"Creating Connections - Building Communities"

Hello fellow UMAAS members! Wow, here we are already gearing up for the warmer spring weather and with that we know the annual UMAAS convention is under preparation. I would like to take this time to personally invite you to join us for our 2015 convention where we will be celebrating

"60 years of...creating connections-building communities."

As convention chair and a very new CAO myself I am honoured but very nervous that Rodney appointed me convention chair this year! I want to THANK all members who returned their surveys, which helped the convention committee put together an agenda to try to make this years' convention among the best in 60 years! We have added a few extra hands on training sessions that I'm sure will be beneficial to all. We are going to continue to go forward with the golf and a tour this

year however we have added an additional "networking opportunity" in the afternoon if there is enough interest! Government relations will be hosting a continuation of Everything you didn't learn in LGA. This session will be guided by Government Relation Advisors but I strongly encourage administrators to bring situations to the session and for other administrators to share their experiences on the topic while advisors guide us to ensure the advice shared is within legislative policies.

I truly believe this is a convention you don't want to miss!!! From the giveaways, to networking with all your friends and colleagues, plus all the valuable training sessions I feel this is going to be a great convention. On behalf of myself, and the convention committee we hope to see you all there!

Executive Editorial

- Kim Gartner
Past President UMAAS

It has been quite some time since I had the honor of contributing to our newsletter with an article. The longer I work at this profession the more I appreciate the individuals that have paved the way in developing the communities of this province.

How many times have you heard "I sure wouldn't want your job" or "Why would I want your job, there are so many other less complicated possibilities"? Sometimes it would seem that we are a profession doomed for extinction! So to fully understand if we are destined for extinction let's take a moment to consider how we compare to the dinosaurs.

Dinosaurs transformed over millions of years and ruled the earth until the ice age wiped them out in dramatic fashion. They weren't all wiped out in a massive ball of fire or an instantaneous rush of water; the process was very gradual and dinosaurs were consumed by their inability to adapt to their changing environment. There were species however that successfully adapted, survived and have descendants in existence today.

Like the dinosaur municipal administration has evolved and transformed since the inception of our great province. Over time we have seen our job descriptions change and public perception of our duties has certainly expanded. Administrators have been a driving

force in the development and progression of our communities; we continue to work with other municipal leaders in guiding our communities towards a sustainable future. Individuals will come and go, but each and every person who accepts the challenge of administration will leave an indelible mark on the development of our province. So, unlike the dinosaurs that became extinct, let's model ourselves after those that evolved and adapted to their ever changing environment.

The next time you hear "I sure wouldn't want your job" reply by asking "Why not?" If we want to attract the best leaders into administrative roles then we have to do a better job of explaining our role in the development of our communities. Mr. George Cuff once described the role of a municipal administrator as a "vocation" and not a "profession". As I think about administrators that I have had the benefit to know, and learn from, it was their dedication to the development of our communities that could well define our profession as a vocation. The Montreal Canadiens have adopted a passage from "In Flanders Fields" (John McCrae) as their motto; maybe we should as well.

"To you from failing hands we throw the torch. Be yours to hold it high."

Community Profile Town of Luseland

- Karyl Y Richardson
Administrator

Declared a village on December 10, 1910, and incorporated as a Town January 1, 1954, the Town of Luseland is situated in an area with active agricultural and oil and gas industries. Luseland boasts a population of approximately 625 and growing. The closure of some area schools have increased the enrollment of our Kindergarten to Grade 12 school to approximately 210 students, all of whom have access to a full range of courses as well as many extra-curricular programs. Amenities in town include a swimming pool, skating and curling rinks, library, museum, movie theatre, golf course and two parks, as well as a number of clubs for all ages, such as Tumbleweeds Square Dancing, Quilting, Embroidery Guild, Guiding, or the local chapter of the Legion.

Over the past 10 years, Luseland has seen steady, sustainable and diversified growth. A new water treatment plant, expansions to the community-owned motel and museum, several new homes and

businesses as well as expansions of existing ones speak of a thriving local economy.

In order to maintain and improve our existing paved airstrip, the Town has recently formed a Regional Airport Board with our neighbours; the RM's of Grass Lake, Heart's Hill, Mariposa, Progress and Tramping Lake as well as the Town of Kerrobert. This strip is used by pleasure craft, crop-sprayers, executive charters as well as the air ambulance and STARS helicopters.

As a result of this growth, the Town is in the process of constructing a new sub-division. This project will be developed in phases, with the first to encompass 70 premium residential lots. We are excited to welcome newcomers who will put down roots in our safe and friendly community.

**Board of Examiners Report from December 8, 2014 and
March 19, 2015 Meetings**

Conditional Certificates

Ember Simpson
Colleen Stinson
Donna Pitre
Jack McHardy
Jennifer Josephson
Valerie Pelton
Elaine Lowton
Brenna Ackerman
Tammy Sloan
Heidi Berlin
Kimberly Downing
Geradine Kreway
Valerie Sticker
Joan Carriere
Alicia Leclercq
Melanie Hartley

Marilyn Madaskie
Michelle MacDonald
Donna Wingert
James Mitchell
Nadine Munroe
Andrea Kohut
Karen Peters
Sarah Wells
Kelly Dodd
Victoria MacDonald
Roxy Johnson
Jennifer Fisher

Standard Certificates

John Sawyshyn
Darlene Moline
Rhonda Woelk
Karen Cragie
Andrea Ball
Ashley Greenshields
Bernie Morton
Glenda Hamilton
Krystal Strong

Candice Quintyn
Dana Klus
Coleen Kitching
Leticia Gould
Lisa Hamelin
Kelly Janzen
Lorna Beaton

Advanced Level 1:

Joanne Loy
Donna Rollie
Kyle Van Den Bosch

Advanced Level 2:

Laurel Gilroy

**E.F.A.P.
EMPLOYEE AND FAMILY
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Do You. . .

- have difficulty coping at work?
- live in fear and apprehension?
- have more bills than money?
- require legal advice?
- find living stressful instead of exciting?
- have trouble talking with your spouse or children?
- use alcohol and/or other drugs to cope with life?
- want someone confidential to talk to?

Wonder What To Do???

If you need information or assistance to sort out a problem we invite you to have a private discussion with your Program Manager, Internal Referral Agent, Supervisor, Employee Group Representative or your Counseling Service.



Human Resources Services Ltd. (HRS)

Regina:	352-4166	Saskatoon:	1-800-305-4477
		Melfort:	1-800-305-4477
		Estevan:	1-800-305-4477

Website: www.hrs-stress.com E-mail: hrs2@sasktel.net
24 HOUR SERVICE/7 DAYS A WEEK
1-800-305-4477

NOTICE

**Need Legal advice on
issues between yourself
as Administrator/CAO and
your Council**

**CALL FOR FREE
INITIAL PHONE
CONSULTATION:**

**Adam R. Touet
The W Law Group
Suite 300, 110 - 21st Street East
Saskatoon, SK. S7K 0B6
Phone: 306-244-2242
Email: atouet@wlawgroup.com**

Mr. Touet is under annual retainer to
your Association and is available to
members for initial consultations.

**2015 UMAAS
Conference
NOTICE!!!**

The Travelodge Hotel, Saskatoon
offers the following
special rate for on-site
Convention Rooms
June 2nd - 5th, 2015

**\$144.00 - Standard
\$164.00 - Business Class
Phone (306) 242-8881**

Please book by May 3rd, 2015
and advise you are with the UMAAS

Notice of Proposed Bylaw Amendment

The following proposed Bylaw No. 4-15 will be introduced at the Friday June 5th, 2015 resolutions session at this year's annual conference. The intent of the amendment is to remove the requirement for members who are seeking to fill the position of CAO, Administrator or Clerk in more than one municipality to have to seek approval of the UMAAS Executive Board. With the current potential for changes in municipal structures and regional collaboration this practice is now encouraged.

1) *Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes.*
- Oscar Wilde

2) *Good judgement comes from experience, and experience comes from bad judgement.*
- Barry LePatner

3) *Experience teaches you to recognize a mistake when you've made it again.*
- Anonymous

BYLAW NO 4-15

A BYLAW OF THE URBAN MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATORS
ASSOCIATION OF SASKATCHEWAN
TO AMEND BYLAW NO. 1-00

The Association in an open meeting at its annual convention enacts as follows:

1) Section 2(5)(d) of Schedule "A" Bylaw 1-00 is hereby deleted.

2) This bylaw shall come into force upon its date of adoption.

4) *Life is what happens while you try to figure out what you're going to do when you grow up.*
- Bruce Lansky



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