

**ATLANTIC MAYORS' CONGRESS  
MINUTES**

**April 25 & 26, 2019**

PRESENT: Mayor Anna Allen, Town of Windsor, NS  
Mayor Wally Anderson, Town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL  
Mayor Stephanie Anglehart-Paulin, City of Campbellton, NB  
Mayor Dawn Arnold, City of Moncton, NB  
Mayor Christine Blair, Municipality of the County of Colchester, NS  
Mayor Carolyn Bolivar-Getson, Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, NS  
Mayor Laurie Boucher, Town of Antigonish  
Mayor Danny Breen, City of St. John's, NL  
Mayor Philip Brown, City of Charlottetown, PEI  
Mayor Roger Caissie, Town of Shediac, NB  
Mayor Jeff Cantwell, Town of Wolfville, NS  
Mayor Rowan Casely, Town of Kensington, PEI  
Mayor Cecil Clark, Cape Breton Regional Municipality, NS  
Mayor Nancy Dicks, Town of New Glasgow, NS  
Warden Timothy Habinski, County of Annapolis, NS  
Mayor Tony Keats, Town of Dover, NL  
Mayor David Kogon, Town of Amherst, NS  
Mayor Adam Lordon, City of Mirimachi, NB  
Warden Jimmy MacAlpine, Municipality of the District of Digby  
Mayor Carol MacDonald, Town of Portugal Cove-St Philip, NL  
Mayor Bill Mills, Town of Truro, NS  
Mayor Pam Mood, Town of Yarmouth, NS  
Mayor Mike Savage, Halifax Regional Municipality, NS  
Mayor Craig Scott, Town of Torbay, NL  
Mayor Arthur Slipp, Town of Woodstock, NB  
Mayor Basil Stewart, City of Summerside, PEI  
Councillor Waye Mason, President, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities

STAFF: Matt Kerrigan, Executive Director, Atlantic Mayors' Congress  
Margot Cragg, Exec Director, Union of the Municipalities of New Brunswick  
Andrew DeFreitas, Manager of Business Development, CN Rail  
Luc Desjardin, President, Association Francophone des Municipalités du Nouveau-Brunswick  
Tiffany Edwards, Manager of Public Affairs (Atlantic Region), CN Rail  
Councillor Isabelle Fry, City of Mount Pearl, NL  
Sean Lewis, Director of Communications, Irving Shipbuilding  
Doug MacDonald, Vice-President (Eastern Region), CN Rail  
Councillor Bruce MacDougall, President, Federation of PEI Municipalities  
Shaune MacKinlay, Chief of Staff, HRM Mayor's Office  
Charline McCoy, Executive Director, Cities of New Brunswick Association  
Craig Pollett, CEO, Municipalities of Newfoundland and Labrador  
Carole Saab, Executive Director of Policy and Public Affairs, Federation of Canadian Municipalities  
Juanita Spencer, CEO, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities  
Kevin Arjoon, Municipal Clerk  
Simon Ross-Siegel, Legislative Assistant

*The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.  
This minute record is presented, using non-binary pronouns, a style used for Halifax  
Regional Council Minutes.*

**1. WELCOME REMARKS, MAYOR MIKE SAVAGE**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 9:00 am on April 25, 2019 in the Council Chamber, Halifax Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Nova Scotia. The Mayor welcomed members to City Hall and acknowledged that members convened on traditional Mi'kmaq territory. The Mayor described and invited members to visit the Downie Wenjack Reconciliation room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of City Hall. The Mayor invited Will Brewer, Town "Crier, to welcome the congress. Mayor Savage introduced members and described the mandate of the Atlantic Mayors' Congress.

The Kevin Arjoon, the Municipal Clerk for Halifax Regional Municipality, indicated that the Council Chamber technology was installed in January 2019, and provided a short orientation to Congress members, the Council Chamber technology.

The Mayor gave a presentation on Halifax's recent changes and growth strategy.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Mayor Pam Mood, that the agenda be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – October 18, 2019, St. John's, NL**

**MOVED by Mayor Anna Allen, seconded by Mayor Bill Mills, that the minutes from the St. John's, NL meeting of October 18, 2019 be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE**

**5. Cogswell District Redevelopment**

The following was before the Congress:

- A presentation on the Cogswell Interchange Redevelopment Project

Donna Davis, Project Manager of the Cogswell Redevelopment Project, and John Spinelli, Project Manager of the Cogswell Redevelopment Project, gave a presentation on the Cogswell Interchange Redevelopment Project. Design was informed by comprehensive public engagement with a final report including 98 recommendations, many of which were incorporated into the amended design. Staff outlined the features of the project, including:

- Active Transportation pathways
- Urban parks
- Improved transit hubs
- Development hubs
- Art and Commemoration
- Financial Analysis

The Chair thanked Donna Davis for the presentation and opened the floor for questions.

In response to questions, Donna Davis distinguished cost-estimate classes for the project with "Class A" costs being relatively fixed and determinable, "Class D" costs being variable at the concept schematic phase, and "Class B" cost being somewhere in between these. "Class B" costs came before HRM Regional Council when the design reached 60% completion.

Mayor Roger Caissie asked how long the planning stage was relative to the anticipated three-year construction. Donna Davis replied that due in part to the scale and importance of the project there has

been an extensive and long planning phase of about three-and-a-half years, although the original concept plan was approved five years ago. Subsequently several other major municipal improvement projects such as the Integrated Mobility Plan required staff and HRM Regional Council's attention extending the planning timeline for this project.

Mayor Jeff Cantwell commended HRM Regional Council on their courage and vision to take this project on and stated that the Mayor had recently come from a conference on greening and active transportation in which the importance of these initiatives was highlighted.

Mayor Dawn Arnold asked what type of citizen engagement was undertaken for the project. Donna Davis replied that the HRM hired Fowler, Bauld & Mitchell (FBM) who had previously performed engagement for the Spring Garden Road Public Library. The engagement team used a four-day design charette which enabled residents to come forward and put markers to maps of parks and the streetscape. The HRM also performed outreach in the wider area of HRM and did not restrict engagement to the area residents.

## **6. Federation of Canadian Municipalities Updates**

The following was before the Congress:

- A presentation on Updates from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities

Carole Saab, Executive Director of Policy, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, gave a presentation on FCM's work and advocacy. FCM represents 200 member-municipalities, 80% of which are rural, remote and northern. FCM's members represent 90% of Canadians. Carole Saab outlined FCM's advocacy strategy for the 2019 federal election and the outcomes of recent advocacy, including:

- The Gas Tax Fund boost
- \$5-6 billion investment in universal internet access
- \$1 billion investment in the FCM Green Municipal Fund

The Chair thanked Carole Saab for the presentation and opened the floor for questions.

Mayor Philip Brown thanked the speaker and indicated a desire to bring a resolution to the members. The resolution seeks to support stacking gas tax funding with other federal government funding such as Investing in Canada's Infrastructure Program. Charlottetown is seeking to partner in the construction of a new library and would like to contribute some of the surplus gas tax funding toward this project.

Mayor Dawn Arnold thanked Carole Saab for the work performed by FCM on behalf of municipalities.

Mayor Bill Mills spoke about the changing relationship between municipalities and the federal government and highlighted how this change is being understood by provincial governments. Mayor Bill Mills asked members how municipalities in Atlantic Canada can build relationships with provincial governments to work with them beyond provincial elections on a long-term basis. Where provinces can direct how municipalities are able to use their available funds, cooperation is essential.

Responding to a question from Mayor Adam Lordon on the release of the final budget, Carole Saab stated that the gas tax funding has been tabled and FCM expects a final vote on this item in June of 2019.

Mayor Carolyn Bolivar-Getson raised concerns regarding the short timeline open to apply for one-time federal funds. The Mayor asked if there were criteria similar to the Connect to Innovate program to facilitate applications and which could be shared between members. Carole Saab clarified that not all funds will flow through the existing Connect to Innovate program, though a significant part will. Carole Saab added that FCM has previously taken note of members comments on this item and will follow up on them. FCM is advocating for streamlining applications, but also working on tailoring applications for each municipality.

Councillor Mason spoke about the challenges of municipalities receiving limited and gradual green infrastructure funding and little to no transit funding. Councillor Mason asked members what their municipalities were doing to address these challenges. Carole Saab replied that in some other provinces, such as in British Columbia, there is more funding which is being provincially matched for these items. In smaller provinces, funding is being limited for fiscal restraint reasons. FCM is doing everything possible to advocate for provincial matching and the federal government has indicated being open to solutions, though progress is likely to be slow with no immediate reprieve in sight. Mayor Basil Stewart agreed with previous comments and stated that there is strength in numbers, and that resolutions passed at the AMC can be an effective form of advocacy.

Mayor Danny Breen agreed with previous speakers and stated that in the context of the new fiscal order, it is important for municipalities to think carefully about services which municipalities have not traditionally funded such as affordable housing, and economic development and investment. Mayor Danny Breen said that a key problem is that there tends to be a very slow payback on investment in these areas. It can take several years for property taxes to respond to service increases. Mayor Danny Breen stated that dedicating a portion of the HST to municipal revenues would greatly assist municipalities in obtaining funding in a timelier manner. Mayor Mike Savage agreed with Mayor Danny Breen and added that climate change is a similar challenge to municipalities in this manner.

The Congress recessed at 10:31 a.m.

The Congress resumed at 10:45 a.m.

## **7. Mayor's Round Table**

The Chair invited the Congress to participate in a roundtable of updates from each of the represented municipalities.

Mayor Carolyn Bolivar-Getson informed the members regarding issues in the district of Lunenburg.

Mayor Pam Mood informed the members regarding issues in the Town of Yarmouth. The municipality is reconstructing its ferry terminal, and Yarmouth's Junior A division hockey team won a recent victory in the Maritime Hockey League.

Councillor Wayne Mason provided an update regarding the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities who continuing advocacy for phasing out the Capped Assessment Program (CAP).

Mayor Stephanie Anglehart-Paulin shared a promotional video for the City of Campbellton and informed the members regarding issues in the Mayor's community. Reconciliation has been a deeply important process and topic for the municipality. The City of Campbellton will be permanently replacing the city hall flag with the Mi'kmaq flag, and staff have been working on creating a permanent indigenous monument. Additionally, the municipality has recently implemented a hotel levy and is very eager to be able to creatively explore opportunities to promote tourism and pursue municipal priorities.

Mayor Roger Cassie shared a promotional video for the Town of Shediac and informed the members regarding issues in the Mayor's community.

Mayor Nancy Dicks informed the members regarding issues in the Town of New Glasgow. The municipality has recently received funding from FCM to hire a staff person to assist the municipality to address issues related to climate change. New Glasgow had experienced challenges allocating resources on this issue. Also, recently residents came to council from the sports community and express challenges regarding access to facilities. Mayor Nancy Dicks noted that this issue intersects with challenges faced by New Glasgow's large black population who have a current need for municipal resources and community centres. Council realizes this is as an opportunity to address these challenges together and the municipality is looking into the potential for partnership. Finally, the municipality is looking to both levels of government to assist New Glasgow to support industry balanced with environmental concerns.

Mayor Cecil Clark informed the members regarding issues in Cape Breton Regional Municipality. The municipality is engaged in a number of construction projects aiming to building capacity and infrastructure. Whereas Halifax is experiencing growth, CBRM is managing decline. Provincial investment is helping the municipality reduce expenses and grow its capacity to operate services for a smaller customer base. The municipality is confronting infrastructure deficits and wastewater challenges and is hopeful that the province will expand the infrastructure funding in the near future.

Mayor Adam Lordon informed the members regarding issues in the City of Mirimichi. The municipality recently released its downtown redevelopment plan, the first in the community's history. This work follows amalgamation which created two downtown areas on each side of the river. The municipality has also been working on developing active transportation policies and measures to address a current housing shortage which aims to encourage growth in the cores and adjacent to transit lines. There is also a warf reconstruction project underway in the downtown core. The mayor held a welcome barbeque for newcomers to great success and the municipality hopes to build on efforts to attract and retain immigrants. The municipality also plans to sign friendship accords soon with neighboring cities and towns.

Warden Jimmy MacAlpine informed the members regarding issues in the District of Digby. The Mayor has been working with Mayor Pam Mood and business leaders to develop opportunities for economic growth. The municipality is exploring opportunities for renewable energy generation, and most recently was the test site for the Tidal Test Turbine. There are opportunities for small scale testing and development of these systems and a Scottish company is currently operating one such generator off an island in the municipality.

Mayor Anna Allen informed the members regarding issues in the Town of Windsor. There has been a growth of recent interest from outsiders regarding development opportunities and four projects are currently underway. This is the largest influx of development in the municipality's history. The municipality recently considered options regarding potentials to consolidate or amalgamate with neighboring West Hants, and ultimately decided to pursue consolidation. Municipal staff have been holding "lunch and learn" sessions together to understand one another's work and roles and by the end of the process the Mayor believes Windsor will have a great model to share with municipalities considering undergoing consolidation.

Mayor Rowan Casely informed the members regarding issues in the Town of Kensington. The Mayor noted that the province has just finished an exciting provincial election with the Green Party forming the official opposition. Kensington will be hosting the Don Johnson Memorial Cup for Hockey. Kensington is continuing to take a key role in facilitating tourism in PEI, and the municipality is seeking to engage the local community on this issue with the creation of a new committee. The municipality aims to be a champion of industry and to work to develop a strategy with local business that benefit from tourism. Kensington is also developing a strategic five-year plan with a fifteen-year assessment.

Mayor Tony Keats informed the members regarding issues in the Town of Dover. The provincial election is scheduled for May 16 and the municipality's message is seeking new revenue sources for municipalities from potentially HST or income taxes. Alternative revenue sources could bring large amounts of funding required to pursue important strategies for residents.

Mayor Craig Scott informed the members regarding issues in the Town of Torbay. The municipality has been busy working on updating its infrastructure and making up for a period of slow development. Torbay is building new trails and updating roadwork, as well as building a new municipal depot and city hall. The municipality partnered with Stantech to develop a unique and comprehensive waterflow model. The model is scaled and collects data which will be available to Torbay's neighboring communities.

Mayor Art Slipp informed the members regarding issues in the Town of Woodstock. Municipalities in New Brunswick are negotiating with the province's minority government on municipal reform. The process for reforms is currently under discussion, and multiple municipal associations in New Brunswick hope to develop a unified message. One issue which is likely to be a challenge is full municipalization. Currently

there are both municipalities and unincorporated areas in New Brunswick. Additionally, the municipalities are having trouble with intake and approval for funding for municipal projects.

Mayor Wally Anderson informed the members regarding issues in the Town of Happy-Valley and Goose Bay. The Mayor represents a community of about 8000 people, and the municipality just passed its largest budget ever. The Budget includes funding for a wellness center which aims to address the shortage of doctors and medical services in a rural community. The municipality is continuing to implement a low-income property tax relief program for seniors. In March, the town will host the Labrador Winter Games, in which 20 communities will participate.

Mayor Christine Blair informed the members regarding issues in the County of Colchester. The municipality is working with Cumberland County on an internet access project as well as a geopark project in the Cliffs of Fundy. Colchester County is also participating as one of four municipalities in the Jordan Municipal Support project with FCM.

Warden Timothy Habinski informed the members regarding issues in the County of Annapolis. The municipality is challenged by climate change issues, and the Mayor reflected that municipalities tend to look to outside agencies to be the solutions. However, Warden Timothy Habinski stated that the effects have to be accommodated locally and the affected communities have knowledge to deal with these challenges. On September 23, 2019, the County of Annapolis will host a local climate summit to shape response and share resources.

Mayor Dave Kogon informed the members regarding issues in the Town of Amherst. While the municipality had previously lost its business development advisory body, the municipality has formed a new Commercial Development Support Program. There has been some influx and expansion of economic growth and a corresponding employee shortage. Regarding climate change, the municipality is collaborating with Nova Scotia Power on a net-zero solar project and with Cumberland County on tourist attraction strategies. The municipality is also collaborating with both Cumberland County and Sackville on climate issues relating to sea-level rise and exploring options for managing the Acadian dykes.

Mayor Jeff Cantwell informed the members regarding issues in the Town of Wolfville. There continues to be a lot of development and activity in the craft brewery and wineries sector. The municipality recently signed a historic memorandum of understanding with the town of Wolfville and Acadia University initiating a strong union and partnership. Like the town of New Glasgow, Wolfville has recently made a successful bid for a climate change initiator to advise the municipality on climate change related issues. The Mayor also encouraged members to inform their constituents of the upcoming Quality of Life Initiative and survey coming soon from Engage Nova Scotia.

Mayor Phillip Brown informed the members regarding issues in the City of Charlottetown. The Mayor identified two resolutions before the Congress, one relating to stacking gas tax transfer funding and another regarding infrastructure improvement. Another issue which is deeply important to the Mayor and the municipality is affordable and accessible housing. The Mayor has a policy available on the municipality's website to inform the public, and the Mayor would like to see what other municipalities in the region have been doing to address this issue.

Mayor Basil Stewart informed the members regarding issues in the City of Summerside. Regarding energy initiatives, the Mayor reported that windfarms currently supply 30% of the municipality's electricity. Summerside is experiencing an influx of development and construction including several apartments and housing development projects. Demand remains high and the vacancy level is close to 0%. Summerside will soon host a National Ringette Tournament and is working with several partners for this event. Summerside also continues to aim to host three to four events per year, and more recently hosted an Elton John concert. Summerside will host the World Acadian Conference as well.

Mayor Laurie Boucher informed the members regarding issues in the Town of Antigonish. The municipality is pursuing objectives which emerged from an engagement study conducted two years prior regarding municipal policies. One of the municipality's current priorities is to instill confidence in Council.

Additionally, the municipality is working toward the formation of an accessibility committee, transit improvements, and applying mental health and accessibility lenses on all decisions. The municipality is also aiming to further policies to pursue environmental sustainability and is currently providing 40% of the municipality's power needs through renewable sources. Antigonish hopes to achieve a balance of wind and solar power going forward. The municipality has also hired a new business developer as well as a new marketing and communications staff person. Antigonish recently hosted the 2018 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games.

Mayor Danny Breen informed the members regarding issues in the City of St. John's. The municipality will host the 2020 Sustainable Communities Conference, an FCM conference and also aims to bid to host the 2020 Creative City Network of Canada Summit. Looking further, St. John's is planning to host the Newfoundland and Labrador Games. The City has also recently hired a sustainability coordinator. Mayor Danny Breen added that too often these issues are on the corner of someone's desk, and climate change is an issue which requires the dedicated attention of a coordinator.

Mayor Dawn Arnold informed the members regarding issues in the City of Moncton. Luke Bryan will be performing in Moncton, and the city will also host a CFL game and three-night performance from Cirque Du Soleil. Moncton is feeling the effects of climate change in the growth of blue-green algae and mosquitos along the river, the former of which is expected to cost the municipality 28 million dollars to remedy. The municipality plans to move forward towards establishing a destination marketing fee and arbitration fees. The number one issue as of this time for the municipality is talent attraction and retention.

Mayor Bill Mills informed the members regarding issues in the Town of Truro. The Tandus Centiva (formerly Crossley Carpets) plant plans to close this year, though a new buyer will be purchasing the space. Five of twenty-four business units are undergoing internal reviews and upgrades, and the municipality is working on repaying debt and building funding reserves. The municipality is currently focusing on low maintenance projects with high impact. Truro is also building on past success with a road preservation tax and has partnered with Colchester County and Millbrook First Nations on several service and cost-sharing projects.

The Chair invited guests and others in attendance to speak to issues of importance to their associations and municipalities.

Councillor Isabelle Fry informed the members regarding issues in the City of Mount Pearl. The City has a new council one half of which is composed of new members. The city also has a new CAO. The City recently made a smart cities bid and is excited to see what emerges from the process.

Mayor Carole MacDonald informed the members regarding issues in the Town of Portugal Cove and St. Phillip. The main issue facing the community is the importance of developing a tourist action plan. To this end, the municipality has negotiated a partnership with six towns who are pleased to be working together. Being a landlocked community is a major challenge for Portugal Cove. The municipality is aiming to respond to this challenge by capitalizing on the town's status as a gateway to Belle Island. The municipality is also considering plans to build a lifestyle or wellness center.

Luc Desjardins informed the members and provided updates regarding the activities of the Association of French Municipalities. The association has not participated often in these meetings but has attended this meeting because it is involved with fifteen other municipalities in New Brunswick in advocating for municipal reforms. The association has files going through all the major issues including fiscal arrangements which are a relevant issue for any municipal framework. The Association understands there is an advocacy movement coming, and francophone associations agree with the Congress and FCM on some issues including the importance of municipalities receiving funding for cannabis enforcement.

The Congress recessed at 12:10 p.m.

The Congress resumed at 3:53 p.m.

## **8. Public Safety Office and Strategy**

The following was before the Congress:

- A presentation on creating conditions for community safety and wellbeing

Amy Sicillano, Public Safety Advisor with HRM, gave a presentation on HRM's first comprehensive public safety strategy. Amy Sicillano described the concept of upstream investment which sees social infrastructure as a crime fighting tool. Community resilience saves municipalities money. Amy Sicillano distinguished internal and external infrastructure and identified how both contribute to building community resilience. Amy Sicillano outlined the history of the development of HRM's public safety strategy and the major components of the strategy, including social development, prevention, risk intervention, and emergency response. Amy Sicillano described the importance of working with community mobilization teams who address the trauma following incidents of crime following the work performed by first responders.

## **9. Emergency Response to community wide events**

The following was before the Congress:

- A presentation on Emergency Management

Erica Fleck, Division Chief Emergency Management with HRM gave a presentation on the municipality's Emergency response management in community-wide events. Erica Fleck described the importance of coordinating and sharing information across municipalities with very different budgets and services. Elected officials set the tone and direction in a community's prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Halifax has 600 to 1000 volunteer emergency responders trained to respond in the event of a crisis. HRM is in the process of creating an Incident Management Team to further strengthen preparation for future emergency scenarios.

The Chair thanked Erika Fleck and Amy Sicillano for the presentations and opened the floor for questions.

Mayor Bill Mills thanked the speakers for their presentations and briefly discussed Truro's emergency preparedness week. Mayor Bill Mills stated that this program aims to enable the municipality to identify any area in the municipality and put out a message to respond to a community wide event.

In response to the presentation, Councillor Bruce MacDonald had questions on the Mayor's role in the event of an emergency. Mindful of time, the Councillor proposed to connect with the presenter at a later time to share information and have a conversation on this topic.

The Congress recessed at 4:50 p.m.

The Congress resumed at 9:02 a.m. on Friday, April 26, 2019.

## **10. CN100 Video Launch for anniversary**

The following was before the Congress:

- A video from CN Rails

Tiffany Edwards, Manager of Public Affairs, CN Atlantic Canada, presented a video commemorating CN's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

## **11. Update on Wastewater Regulations;**

The following was before the Congress:

- A presentation on wastewater system effluent regulations

Carl Yates, General Manager, Halifax Water, gave a presentation on federal wastewater regulations. Carl Yates described changes and recent issued relating to toxicity standards, monitoring and reporting, deadlines for municipal compliance for high-risk, mid-risk and low-risk effluent systems, transitional authorization, and supervisory control and data acquisition systems (SCADA).

The Chair thanked Carl Yates for the presentation and opened the floor for questions.

Mayor Danny Breen thanked the presenter and stated that this topic is urgent and relevant to St. John's where the city faces a similar situation. Based on the 2011-12 assessment period, St. John's effluent system has technically been assessed to be high risk. When St. John's originally installed and began operating several new digester tanks, there were initial starting challenges. However following testing and adopting to the new systems, risk factors are now in the low 70 range, and St. John's is more accurately a middle risk for wastewater regulations. However, despite these changes, the federal regulators have not provided an adjustment though it is within the Minister's power to do so. If St. John's is required to raise the debt ceiling to address wastewater challenges and comply with the current regulations based on its current assessed risk level, the city risks losing opportunities to qualify for federal funds available for municipalities.

Mayor Phillip Brown enquired how secondary systems are likely to be assessed for wastewater risks under the new regulations and asked whether sewage lagoons will have to be converted. Carl Yates replied that it would be advisable to perform a risk assessment to first determine what upgrades will be necessary.

Mayor Pam Mood stated that her municipality is fortunate to be assessed as low risk. Currently, the prescriptive requirement for Yarmouth is to do the upgrades rather than the pipe changes, the later of which is preferable to the municipality. Mayor Pam Mood suggested other municipalities should advocate for a similar prioritization to federal regulators. Carl Yates agreed with Mayor Pam Mood and reiterated that old pipes are a major challenge for many municipalities in Nova Scotia, some systems being the oldest in Canada. Staff is also currently working with Dalhousie University to find inexpensive alternatives for pipe replacement and upgrading as a means to meet federal wastewater regulations.

Mayor Mike Savage stated agreement with the comments of the previous speakers and expressed that the municipalities do not dispute that residents deserve a high standard of treatment for wastewater in order to protect and preserve the environment, but there is an arbitrariness in the standards. Mayor Savage proposed a potential resolution recommending federal regulators to update assessment information from 2012 to 2014 to recognize recent expansion and improvements to wastewater treatment undertaken by the member municipalities.

Mayor Bill Mills agreed with previous speakers regarding the challenges facing member municipalities with uniquely older pipe systems and agreed that municipalities should advocate for prioritizing this issue in communicating with federal regulators.

Mayor Tony Keats agreed with previous speakers that the members do not deny the importance of comprehensive wastewater treatment, but members are seeking affordable, manageable, solutions-based approaches. Many member municipalities would be happy to install new systems, but not at the expense of other requirements. Mayor Tony Keats supported efforts to work with the Ministry of Environment for affordable solutions.

Mayor Roger Caissie stated that in Shediac the wastewater system is a wastewater lagoon system, and the municipality has been compliant with 2020 regulations since 1996. However, the municipality experiences sewage overflows. Though this is not uncommon for similar municipalities with similar systems, it is a challenge the municipality seeks to effectively respond to. In terms of the application of federal regulations, regulators do not oversee or provide information regarding sewage overflows, and regulators do not take steps to alert to public regarding risks from rain infiltration systems. Mayor Roger Caissie expressed that the municipality seeks to provide information for residents regarding these risks,

but often wishes staff had more comprehensive information from provincial or federal regulators to effectively do so.

The Congress reviewed several resolutions previously drafted by the Congress on wastewater funding.

The Congress voted on the resolution at this time.

**MOVED by Mayor Danny Breen, seconded by Mayor Phillip Brown that:**

**WHEREAS, municipalities support a high standard of treatment for wastewater in order to protect and preserve the environment and many have undertaken expansion and improvements to wastewater treatment at a considerable expense; and**

**WHEREAS, the Government of Canada is introducing new standards that will require further expenditure for municipalities to meet these standards; and WHEREAS a Risk Based Management approach recognizes the assimilative capacity of the receiving waters and sets the 'end-of-pipe' discharge parameters accordingly; and**

**WHEREAS, the intention of sewage treatment is to lessen the environmental impacts of effluent and the impact depends on the receiving water body, a complete approach to Risk Based Management; and**

**WHEREAS, treating all sewage to an arbitrary minimum level without considering the impacts and capacity would be a waste of resources; and**

**WHEREAS, a risk-based approach is consistent with other federal programs; and**

**WHEREAS, the proposed new standards do not recognize the assimilative capacity of the receiving waters and therefore force undue resource pressure on effected municipalities;**

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

- **The AMC supports a risk-based management approach to the discharge of wastewater, with no minimum standards; and**
- **The AMC will communicate this position to Municipal Associations, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the respective provincial governments and the government of Canada; and**
- **If the standards are to proceed, AMC will work collaboratively with Municipal associations, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and provincial governments to ensure that federal funding to municipalities to execute the standards is included as part of the implementation strategy to enable all regions to comply; and**

**FURTHER BE RESOLVED:**

- **That the appropriate capital funding requirements will be addressed by a funding strategy which recognizes the relative capacity of the three levels of government in an affordable and sustainable manner; and**
- **That a specific federal based program be developed for the CCME National Wastewater Standards initiative; and**
- **That the AMC further call upon the federal and provincial governments in designing and developing this funding strategy that it not only addresses the capital cost requirements but the operating cost requirements as well.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Matt Kerrigan confirmed for members that they would work with the Chair to transmit the resolution, from the Chair to other levels of government on behalf of the Congress.

## 12. Update on Atlantic First Nations Water Authority

The following was before the Congress:

- A presentation on the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority

Carl Yates, General Manager, Halifax Water, gave a presentation on the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority (AFNWA). Halifax Water has been working with the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority and their partners to develop a new strategy in providing service delivery in First Nations communities. Carl Yates's presentation described the background and formation of the Atlantic First Nations Clean Water Initiative, and its three main activities as a regional First Nations water authority, to provide financing models, and to provide drinking and wastewater regulation for First Nations communities. Carl Yates added that providing drinking water regulation is a challenge because the federal government has not previously regulated this service due to the separation of powers.

The AFNWA is being built as a new entity for service delivery, and is intended to operate as a business, not a political entity, local chiefs will serve on the board to ensure accountability. At present, twenty band councils have signed resolutions to explore the feasibility of the AFNWA model. Carl Yates shared several story boards developed through the consultation with First Nations communities and provided context and a brief description for each board.

In addition, Carl Yates also presented an organization chart, and a map detailing the six proposed service regions and First Nations communities with municipal transfer agreements. A key role for the AFNWA will be to encourage training and build capacity to deliver service. Carl Yates described next steps including the collection of further band council resolutions of commitment and the establishment of a project charter to set a firm time like to operationalize the water authority by spring of 2020.

The Chair thanked Carl Yates for the presentation and opened the floor for questions.

Members reviewed a draft letter and resolution of support for the AFNWA addressed to the Minister of Indigenous Services.

**MOVED by Mayor Mike Savage, seconded by Mayor Stephanie Anglehart-Paulin that:**

**THAT the Atlantic Mayors' Congress issue the letter of support for the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority initiative to The Honourable Seamus O'Regan, Minister of Indigenous Services.**

Mayor Stephanie Anglehart-Paulin expressed strong support and stated that the creation of the AFNWA would be vital to true reconciliation. Mayor Mike Savage expressed strong support and added that the issue goes beyond water delivery itself. Effective development and business attraction in First Nations communities is connected to clean water.

Mayor Bill Mills asked if Halifax Water has considered how the AFNWA will relate to oversight bodies like the Nova Scotia Utilities and Review Board. Carl Yates described that Halifax Water has considered oversight considerably in light of the feature that there will likely be two regulators for the AFNWA. Environment Canada will regulate the effluents, but for business regulations, there should be a federal oversight agency as well. This could either be the Treasury Board of Canada or the Department of Indigenous Services.

Mayor Wally Anderson expressed support for the resolution and mentioned that in Labrador there are three aboriginal societies and Happy Valley-Goose Bay is the largest Aboriginal populated community in Labrador. Many residents struggle to receive quality drinking water. The Mayor Anderson expressed concern that other indigenous societies such as Inuit societies, may feel they were not consulted on an issue which is a vital priority to them as well. In addition, Mayor Anderson suggested an amendment to the third paragraph adding "Furthermore, the Atlantic Mayors' Congress fully supports good clean safe drinking water and effective wastewater treatment in all indigenous and aboriginal communities throughout the Atlantic Provinces."

**MOVED by Mayor Wally Anderson, seconded by Mayor Mike Savage that:**

**THAT the third paragraph be amended by adding:**

**“Furthermore, the Atlantic Mayors’ Congress fully supports good clean safe drinking water and effective wastewater treatment in all indigenous and aboriginal communities throughout the Atlantic Provinces.”**

**MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mayor Jeff Cantwell expressed support for the resolution and stated the Mayor intends to take this information back to council for consideration.

Mayor Christine Blair expressed full support resolution and asked if there will be new Atlantic guidelines, or if each province will change their guidelines, and whether the guidelines will apply only to First Nations communities or to municipalities generally. Carl Yates stated that based on the nation-to-nation framework, all regulation will be federal and the provinces will decline to regulate. Carl Yates referred to work by Dr. Graham Gagnon, the Director of the Centre for Wastewater Resource Studies at Dalhousie University, who has put forward proposed regulations which will likely match Nova Scotia’s surface water regulations, and mirror PEI’s groundwater regulations.

Mayor Anna Allen expressed support for the resolution and added that there could be cost savings for municipalities supportive of partnering with First Nations communities in delivering water services. Mayor Allen raised the example of Millbrook which has relationships with Truro and East Hants to deliver water. As well as being an obligation on all Canadians to support and uplift first nations communities, there are mutual gains to municipalities in expanding their rate-bases.

**MOVED by Mayor Mike Savage, seconded by Mayor Stephanie Anglehart-Paulin that:**

**THAT the Atlantic Mayors’ Congress issue the letter of support for the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority initiative, as amended to The Honourable Seamus O’Regan, Minister of Indigenous Services.**

**MOTION AS AMENDED PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Congress recessed at 10:35 a.m.

The Congress resumed at 10:50 a.m.

### **13. Alternative Revenue Sources for Municipalities**

The following was before the Congress:

- A presentation on Alternative Revenue Sources for Municipalities

Fred Morley, Chief Economist, Tourism Nova Scotia, gave a presentation on alternative revenue sources for municipalities. The presentation discussed backgrounds and trends regarding municipal revenue sources as well as issues and responses to recent demographic pressures and economic changes. Compared to other municipalities, Canadian municipalities are largely restricted to and dependent on property taxes for their revenue. However, recently many funding responsibilities which are nominally provincial have elements falling to the municipalities as the challenges they address have become more complex. Fred Morley outlined benefits and challenges associated with property taxes including their nature as immovable assets, difficulty to conceal or evade taxation, repressive tax consequences, and delays between service improvement investments and a corresponding rise in property taxes.

Fred Morley continued to explain how demographic and economic structural changes are impacting property tax trends. These trends include the residents downsizing into smaller homes, growing demand

for multiple-unit apartments over single-detached housing, and the reduced use of commercial space as Canada broadly transitions from a manufacturing to service economy.

Fred Morley discussed and outlined potential alternative revenue sources for municipalities and best options regarding taxation. These included expanding revenue bases through land transfer taxes, amusement taxes, poll taxes, road and congestion pricing, parking charges for condensed areas, and municipal sales and income tax though the later will likely remain very difficult to implement. Fred Morley advised members to link taxes to expenditures or existing tax streams, and to anticipate push-backs on new revenue measures. Likewise, Fred Morley suggested the potential best options are likely to be revenue sharing with the province through the gas tax, income tax, HST, etc., as well as continuing to advocate for municipal equalization. Fred Morley also encouraged members to explore and continue to creatively use marketing levies for municipal revenue and to continue to explore options to tax elements of the sharing economy such as ride-sharing and e-hospitality.

The Chair thanked Fred Morley for the presentation and opened the floor for questions.

Mayor Phillip Brown asked members how many municipalities have accommodation taxes and spoke about difficulties regarding negotiating with hotel accommodators regarding the possible uses of marketing levies including affordable housing. Fred Morley discussed the arrangement with discover Halifax to which the municipality allocates 60% of revenues generated through the marketing levy. Fred Morley compared this arrangement with that in other municipalities with full or partial allocations. As Airbnb and other e-hospitality services enter the market, municipalities may consider working with these providers to allocate a portion of the marketing levy to put toward funding affordable housing.

Danny Breen agreed that municipalities are often challenged by hotel associations to consider money raised through marketing levies as reserved solely for their use. Likewise, Mayor Danny Breen stated that St. John's has requested legislative changes from the province to enable the municipality to collect taxes from e-hospitality services, but the province has not made these changes as of this time. Mayor Danny Breen also expressed concern that e-hospitality services like Airbnb contribute to the loss of rental space and the increase of affordable housing challenges without an effective regulatory response.

Mayor Roger Caissie asked if any other municipality in Canada has made a significant departure from property tax as a main source of revenue. Fred Morley replied that largely they have not due to the legal challenges to do so. Fred Morley suggested that the gas tax was the closest example of such a shift and expressed that the measure has been very successful.

#### **14. Member Issues:**

The Congress reviewed several resolutions previously discussed during the Thursday and Friday sessions of the AMC.

The Congress voted on the resolution on the Gas Tax Fund at this time.

**MOVED by Mayor Danny Breen, seconded by Mayor Phillip Brown that:**

**WHEREAS, the Gas Tax Fund (GTF) was designed to leverage the strength of each level of government; and**

**WHEREAS, the GTF recognizes the diversity of Canadian provinces, territories, regions, and communities and the inherent need for a flexible approach to program delivery; and**

**WHEREAS, the GTF provides predictable, long term funding for communities, where communities choose projects locally and prioritize them according to their needs; and**

**WHEREAS, the GTF is administered via an open and transparent governance process which recognizes and communicates Canada's contribution to communities' infrastructure priorities and includes regular program evaluations and progress reporting to Canadians; and**

**WHEREAS, the Canadian government must recognize that the financial availability and affordability of municipalities differ across the Country; and**

**WHEREAS, there is a need to recognize that financial disparity, in particular for the Country's smaller populated provinces and territories and the municipalities in which they serve.**

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED; that the Atlantic Mayors Congress support the GTF being able to be used towards the Municipality's share of other Federal Infrastructure Programs such as the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) in the Atlantic Provinces; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED; that the Atlantic Mayor Congress request that the Federal Government amend the GTF Program to allow for stacking with other Federal Government funding; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED; that the Atlantic Mayors Congress seek the support of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities for this initiative.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Congress voted on the resolution on the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) amendment at this time.

**MOVED by Mayor Danny Breen, seconded by Mayor Phillip Brown that:**

**WHEREAS; The Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) will create long-term economic growth, build inclusive, sustainable communities and support a low carbon, green economy; and**

**WHEREAS; The Community, Culture and Recreation Stream will focus on projects that improve citizen's access to and quality of cultural, recreational and community spaces; and**

**WHEREAS; A professional or semi-professional sport facility that is primarily a commercial operation, such as those that serve major junior hockey leagues is excluded from funding under the ICIP;**

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED; that the Atlantic Mayors Congress support that municipalities should be able to determine their community, culture and recreational needs and that those needs be eligible for funding under the ICIP inclusive of being able to be used for the purposes of semi-professional sport; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED; that the Atlantic Mayor Congress request that the Federal Government amend the ICIP Program to allow for semi-professional sport facilities to be funded and that the support of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities is pursued to support this initiative.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mayor Craig Scott proposed that future meetings of the AMC be moved ahead one day so as to occur on Friday and Saturday respectively for the convenience of members in smaller municipalities who have other professional responsibilities which limit weekday dates available to attend professional association meetings. Warden Timothy Habinski expressed strong support for the proposed changes. Municipal leadership is a challenging time commitment and low levels of compensation for public service at the municipal level places challenges on members seeking to participate. Warden Habinski indicated that

moving the dates will help reduce a barrier to participation for members who must also balance their professional responsibilities. Mayor Basil Stewart also supported the proposal on the basis that it may raise attendance. AMC members expressed general support and consent for the proposed change. Matt Kerrigan stated that in the context of general support, no resolution was necessary to make the proposed change.

**15. Notes on next meeting**

Regarding the next scheduled meeting place for the AMC in Campbellton, New Brunswick, Mayor Stephanie Anglehart-Paulin stated that options for flights will be available and the Mayor will also provide follow-up information on car rental and hotel options. The Mayor asked that any resolutions please be sent to organizers before noon on Saturday, October 3, 2019.

Regarding the subsequent meeting, Matt Kerrigan stated that three municipalities have currently offered to host. These are Truro, Cape Breton Regional Municipality, and Charlottetown.

Mayor Basil Stewart suggested that the AMC draft a letter thanking former Mayor Clifford Lee for many years of service to the AMC. Matt Kerrigan confirmed they will draft a letter of thanks.

**16. Adjournment**

The Congress adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Kevin Arjoon  
Municipal Clerk  
Halifax Regional Municipality