

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Board meets regularly to review matters of general interest to municipalities. As a Board member and part of its Regional and Single-tier Caucus, I am writing to share some highlights with you of the Board's recent meeting, held September 27, 2019.

For context, the AMO Board includes 39 members. The Board of Directors sets AMO's direction and adopts its policies and its priorities. As a corporate body, the Board of Directors ensures adherence to legal requirements, as set out in the foundation charter and in the law. The Board also delegates the overall management of the organization to the Executive Director and a team of professionals. The Executive Director is responsible for the Board's strategic orientation process and for its policies, as well as for the organization's financial and overall management.

Board meetings are normally held on the fourth Friday in September, November, January, March and June. There is also a Board meeting during the weekend prior to the AMO Annual Conference in August.

September 27, 2019 Meeting Results

At its September 27th meeting, the Board considered several matters and received information regarding a variety of issues. The following reflects a summary of the meeting's results:

Joint and Several Liability Reform Submission

The Board considered and approved a submission to the Attorney General which includes key recommendations which address municipal impacts related to joint and several liability. Next week the AMO paper will be distributed to all municipal councils for consideration and endorsement.

Paramedic Services: New Models of Patient Care

AMO will respond to Ontario's regulatory posting on implementing new models of care for select low acuity 9-1-1 patients. If enacted, the regulations under the *Ambulance Act* will provide more flexibility for paramedics to treat patients in other ways than taking them to an emergency department. AMO will emphasize the need to improve dispatch before the new models' implementation. Municipal governments and District Social Service Administration Boards can respond to the regulatory [posting](#) by October 6th.

Blue Box Program

Blue Box is transitioning to full producer responsibility. Municipal councils will need to make big decisions on how this will occur in your community. Watch for regional workshops, webinars and update bulletins from AMO this fall.

Conservation Authorities (CAs)

The Board has identified some transition considerations for Bill 108 conservation authority-related changes. Additional information is needed from the Ministry regarding what activities, to what level of detail, are required to support the mandated roles of

CAs. AMO is working with Conservation Ontario on a template for the creation of MOUs between CAs and municipal governments. The template is a sample and municipal governments are free to negotiate items. Finally, there are local considerations that will require some coordination.

Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)

The AMO Board is largely supportive of the changes to the PPS. Many clarifications and increased flexibility are welcomed. Some councils may encounter tension between this increased flexibility and the requirements for environmental protections. Additional guidance for low growth, rural and northern use of the PPS, similar to that provided in 2014, is requested. Prior to implementing the PPS, a number of provincial guidance documents are needed. It is important that appropriate guidance on Indigenous engagement not download the Crown's Duty to Consult but rather demonstrates how municipal governments can be helpful in supporting this Crown responsibility. Consultation ends October 21st.

Social Assistance Reform Update

AMO staff provided the AMO Board with an update on social assistance reform and sought direction on AMO's advocacy approach on the elimination of Transitional Child Benefit and changes to the definition of 'disability.' If the Transitional Child Benefit is eliminated municipal governments may be left to fill in the gap to keep low-income families, particularly refugee claimants, housed. This will negatively impact families and will create fiscal challenges for municipal governments. AMO will advocate for the decision to eliminate this benefit to be reversed. On the proposed change to the definition of disability, AMO will seek assurances from the province that the change will not add costs to municipal governments. Changes to the definition may lead to increases in the Ontario Works caseload with potential impacts on municipal service delivery costs.

E-Scooter Pilot Framework

The AMO Board approved sending a letter to the Minister of Transportation highlighting municipal concerns with the provincial government's proposed e-scooter pilot framework. Of great concern are the proposed timeframe for the pilot launch, the proposed speed limit, data collection requirements, municipal liability protections and the need to ensure a municipal say in regulating e-scooters locally.

Provincial Data Strategy

The provincial government has released a second discussion paper towards the development of an Ontario Data Strategy. Comments are due October 9th. The AMO board approved responding positively to the discussion paper, emphasizing the need to ensure access to fast reliable broadband across Ontario and the need for provincial supports to enable widespread municipal data sharing with businesses and the public.

AMO staff will continue to work with the province to respond to future discussion papers of municipal interest.

Updates

The Board received several updates regarding AMO activities and ongoing projects. These included:

Long-Term Care Funding Extension

Earlier in 2019, the province changed the funding model for long-term care. While there was a 1.7% overall increase in the funding envelope, the funding model changes resulted in significant in-year reductions for municipal homes. AMO, municipal governments and [AdvantAge Ontario](#), a staff association representing municipal homes, asked for a reconsideration of the changes. It is therefore welcome news to hear that the Minister of Long-Term Care is extending the funding change implementation timeline while exploring alternatives. The ministry will be consulting on a new small capital program and developing a long-term care staffing strategy. AMO thanks the government for its responsiveness and looks forward to working with the ministry on the design of new funding programs + the staffing strategy.

Aggregates Consultation

MNR has announced a [consultation](#) on changes to the *Aggregates Resources Act* which ends November 4th. Key elements under consideration are the proposal to require a new application rather than an amendment if a producer wants to extract below water level, clarification around the limits to zoning, and preventing the LPAT imposition of haul route agreements.

Broadband Strategy Released

On July 23, 2019, the Government released “[Up to Speed](#): Ontario’s Broadband and Cellular Action Plan.” The Strategy includes a commitment to launch a \$150 million provincial broadband and cellular infrastructure program beginning in 2020-2021. AMO will provide updates as further details become available.

Prompt Payment & Adjudication in Force October 1st

As of October 1st, the *Construction Act* is now in full force and effect. This will have significant impacts to municipal procurement practices, both as an owner of infrastructure projects, and as individual homeowners. For more information, click [here](#).

Building Services Transformation

The provincial government has announced a consultation on the transformation of building code services. A [discussion paper](#) has been posted online and is open for

municipal input until November 25th. Regional information sessions will also be held in Chatham-Kent, Belleville, North Bay and Vaughan. Notably, the province is proposing to create a new delegated administrative authority to provide services to the building sector and streamline the building code process. AMO will analyze the discussion paper and report back to the AMO board.