

Nova Scotia Assessment Management Board (AMB)
Minutes
April 28, 2006

Attendees

John Cameron
Russell Walker
Lloyd Hines
Charles Crosby
Ken Simpson
Trudy LeBlanc

John Prall
Bobby McNeil
Amery Boyer
Delphis Comeau
Kathy Gillis
Tracy Williams

Guests

Rose Landry
David MacDonald
Lisa Conrad
Michelle MacFarlane

1. Minutes

- The Minutes of March 31, 2006 were reviewed and accepted.

2. Additions to the Agenda

- UNSM Presentation
- Media Policy / Key Messages
- Informal Correspondence

3. Budget

- Lisa Conrad and David MacDonald provided a projected figure for 2007/08 which includes \$900k (new money) as per the draft Deloitte financial implications report for the establishment of a municipally-controlled Assessment entity.

- Suggestions from Board members on the present budget / set-up included:

- Have financial accounting format created for the new entity (similar to what the municipalities use).
- Create "test" documents and have the Board members review them.
- Assessment should have a significant reserve (ie. for technology in five years' time); establish a policy.
- Reword some of the language used (ie. assessment recovery) to something more familiar to the municipal units.

4. Billing For Assessment Cost Recovery

- An implication of an independent municipally-controlled Assessment entity is working capital. At present, municipalities are billed late in the fiscal year. The AMB determined that the municipalities should be billed quarterly to avoid having to borrow money to pay bills for salaries, rent, etc.

- A letter was issued to the President of the UNSM to discuss the proposed change in procedure for billing with his Board of Directors and provide comments back to the AMB before implementation. (The UNSM will provide their feedback after their May 10/06 meeting.)

Billing For Assessment Cost Recovery - Continued

- David MacDonald provided three phase-in billing options for the 2006/07 fiscal year. The AMB agreed that the following option was the way to go unless there is significant opposition from the UNSM Board of Directors (the AMB will be meeting in May before the billing goes out):

Issue Date: June 1 st	Payment Date: July 1 st	Portion: 25%
Issue Date: Sept 1 st	Payment Date: Oct 1 st	Portion: 25%
Issue Date: Dec 1 st	Payment Date: Jan 1 st	Portion: 50%

- Board members agreed that municipalities would be charged interest on unpaid bills and/or late payments. A formula will be determined.

5. Strategic Plan Overview

- Further to the above noted document issued to the Board members at last month's meeting for review, Kathy indicated she required the Board's approval and general direction to proceed before consulting staff, municipal units, etc. The Board members agreed to endorse the "go forward". Kathy indicated that she and her management staff will be meeting fairly soon with Rose Landry to start the "rollout" process.

6. Branding

- MT&L consultants will present the branding document at next month's meeting.

7. Business Case Update - Devolution of Assessment Services

- Kathy indicated that she, Minister Hurlburt and Deputy Minister Greg Keefe attended a "special issues" committee meeting on April 13/06. Following the meeting it was indicated the issue will be brought forward at a later date.
- Michelle MacFarlane provided a summary document of the comments / suggestions received from the municipal units on the Governance Discussion Paper. The Board reviewed the summary and discussed what should / should not be added to the governance document.

8. UNSM Conference (May 10-12/06) - Assessment Presentation

- The Board reviewed the draft presentation.

9. Media Policy / Key Messages

- A Media Policy was provided to the Board members as well as Key Messages - Points for Emphasis. Lloyd Hines was appointed as the designated media spokesperson for the AMB and Russell Walker will be the back-up.

10. Other Updates

PAIP

- 50 people responded to the employment advertisement, approximately 20 will be hired.

2007 Preliminary Roll

- The scheduled mailing date for preliminary assessment notices is June 19/06; about 292,000 notices will be issued.
- A residential/commercial percentage change breakdown by region and provincially (as of April 23/06) was provided.

IAS (Integrated Assessment System) Project

- Kathy provided each member with a copy of the IAS Project Timeline chart (as of April 28/06) which shows the various activities that have been completed to date, on schedule, and the activities to be completed for implementation of the new technology system

Meeting Adjourned
Next Meeting - May 26, 2006