

**Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association  
Board of Directors Minutes**

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**October 7, 2021**

**Victoria Inn**

**Present:** Wendy Landry, Deb Ewald, Wendy Brunetta, Jody Davis, Fred Mota, Rick Dumas, Gord Griffiths, Mark Vermette, Mark Figliomeni, Doug Hartnell, Jason Young, Jim Vezina, Norm Gale (arrived 11am) and Andrea Strawson

**Regrets:** Kevin Kahoot and Brian McKinnon

**Guests:** Pat Vanini (left 10:30am), Mary Dawson-Cole, Carmelo Lipsi, Rosemary Dyni, Richard Scott, Kathy Horgan, Melanie Muncaster, Martin Rondeau, and Jamie Brunette.

**1. Call to Order:**

MOTION: THAT the meeting to be called to order at 9:33 am EST.

Moved by: Jim Vezina, Seconded by: Deb Ewald

CARRIED

**2. Approval of the Agenda:**

MOTION: THAT the Agenda be approved as presented.

Moved by: Doug Hartnell Seconded by: Rick Dumas

CARRIED

**3. Approval of the Minutes of August 11, 2021:**

MOTION: THAT the minutes of the meeting held on August 11, 2021, be approved as presented.

Moved by: Mark Vermette, Seconded by: Gord Griffiths

CARRIED

**4. Approval of the Financial Statement:**

Executive Director (ED) provided verbal report.

MOTION: THAT the financial statement be approved as presented.

Moved by: Deb Ewald, Seconded by: Wendy Brunetta

CARRIED

**5. New Business**

**5.1 MPAC Update 9:40 to 10:10am**

Mary Dawson-Cole provided an update from MPAC. Discussions occurred regarding quality service commissioner, digital aerial photography, tailing ponds in mining industry, and valuation of properties.

## **5.2 MTO Discussion topics and Ontario Northland Transportation Commission (ONTC)**

A discussion occurred regarding ONTC concerns within the region. There is concern regarding poorly scheduled and inconvenient bus times through some communities. For example, in Marathon the bus comes through at 3am. There are also areas that are still not serviced such as west end of Rainy River on Highway 11. The ED will inform the MTO of concerns and will organize a meeting with MTO to discuss future highway development, washroom facilities along highway being maintained throughout winter, the possibility of opening the boarder to public transportation and the possibility of the government subsidizing the bus system.

## **5.3 PCCIA People & Communities Workshop**

Jody Davis provided an update on the workshop to accompany the written update emailed to board. The Ministry is holding workshops to acquire input from a variety of stakeholders to discuss climate change, the risks it presents, the effects it could have on our communities, and ideas to develop a plan to deal with the effects. The regional risks discussed include the increase of temperatures and the severity of droughts, floods, and wildfires. It is beginning to have major impacts on health, infrastructure, and economies in all aspects of our lives.

## **5.4 Ministry Discussion 10:31 to 11:17am (Closed session)**

MOTION: THAT at the hour of 10:31am the Board moves to closed session.

Moved by: Jason Young, Seconded by: Wendy Brunetta

CARRIED

MOTION: THAT at the hour of 11:17am the Board resumes the regular meeting in open session.

Moved by: Jody Davis, Seconded by: Deb Ewald

CARRIED

## **5.5 Eye Care Resolution Discussion**

Deb Ewald reported on the eye care resolution. A discussion occurred. It was determined we will not engage in this issue at this time.

## **5.6 Bear Issues**

Rick Dumas reported on the bear issues occurring in the Thunder Bay region. There is only one bear technician and one bear trap for the Nipigon to Marathon area which is inadequate. There are not adequate resources to deal with multiple bears, which is a safety concern for our residents. OPP calls for service to respond to bear issues is on the rise. Bears are shot instead of relocated as OPP are not equipped to deal with the situation. Municipalities are paying for bear management through calls for service. More bear technicians are needed to relieve responsibility from OPP. A discussion occurred regarding the Spring Bear Hunt and its importance and how it encourages tourism to our area and will improve economic development by bringing money to our communities. ED will send a letter to the Minister of Natural Resources to outline the bear issue

experienced in the region, to obtain an update on the Spring Bear Hunt and if it will be expanded, follow up on bear-wise that is not working, and our ability to put bear traps back in communities. It was expressed that in Terrace Bay they now have 2 bear technicians and as a result they do not have bear issues. We will also suggest more community education is necessary to encourage residents to stop feeding bears and close garage doors.

### **5.7 NOMA support a Northern Ontario COVID-19 Recovery Act**

ED relayed questions asked by media regarding NOMA supporting a Northern Ontario COVID-19 Recovery Act. NOMA will not comment at this time.

### **5.8 New Computer**

ED explained the issues experienced by the computer and printer. Kristen Oliver experienced similar issues and stated the computer was purchased in 2016/2017. MOTION: THAT the Executive Director be given a budget of \$5000 to purchase a new computer, printer, and other necessary office supplies.

Moved by: Rick Dumas, Seconded by: Jim Vezina

CARRIED

Norm Gale inquired if our policy provides the ED with an office budget. Will discuss office budget policy at next board meeting.

### **5.9 Onboarding Strategy for new Board members**

ED outlined a proposed onboarding strategy for new members. It would include a 1 hour zoom call with new members to outline expectations, policies, board meeting frequency, current issues, frequency of communication, history of NOMA, to review and sign the code of conduct and obtain contact information. Wendy Landry suggested an explanation of the structure of NOMA's partner associations be included and our representation within these organizations. For example, appointments to the AMO Board and Northern Caucus and our relationship with FONOM and ROMA. It was also suggested to outline the process of meeting with government. There was discussion on whether a meeting was necessary vs the ED providing a reading package. The ED expressed the benefits of having a face-to-face meeting to connect with new members. A mentor program was also discussed. The ED will finalize the Onboarding Program and will implement it moving forward with new Board members.

### **5.10 NOHFC Legal Agreement**

A discussion occurred regarding the NOHFC agreement. It was determined the ED will sign agreement on behalf of NOMA.

### **5.11 2022 Conference & AGM**

It was decided that we will move forward with an in-person NOMA Conference and AGM at the Curling Club in Fort Frances from Wednesday April 27 to Friday April 29<sup>th</sup>. We will review this decision on November 24<sup>th</sup> to respond to any COVID developments.

MJ Interactive is still able to provide service for AV. It was determined that board meetings are to be in-person when possible and the ED is to purchase the equipment necessary to allow for hybrid meetings and to accommodate presentations by outside organizations virtually.

#### **5.12 It Takes a Forest – Billboard Campaign**

ED relayed emailed regarding It Takes a Forest Billboard Campaign and their request for our collaboration to erect 3-5 billboards as part of this campaign. It was determined that NOMA will participate. The ED will arrange a meeting.

#### **5.13 Fentanyl use and future cost to municipalities**

ED relayed issue brought forward by former board member.

Wendy Landry discussed NOMA policy regarding election appointments which resulted in Kevin Holland and Dwight Monck's resignation. Wendy welcomed newcomers Mark Figliomeni and Jim Vezina and informed the board of Shelby Ch'ng's resignation. There are 2 vacancies on the NOMA Board for the City of Thunder Bay and KDMA.

### **6. Executive Director Report**

ED expressed that moving forward the "Executive Director Report" will be included in the agenda for ED to provide an update. ED notified Board that AMO Delegation thank you letters were sent to ministers and congratulations letters to new cabinet ministers after cabinet shuffle. ED working to schedule meeting with Todd Smith to discuss Energy and obtaining contact with Federal government to discuss WSER.

ED Attended the following meetings:

1. AMO Delegation with Conservative, Liberal, and NPD. Participated in joint meeting with FONOM and NOSDA on Mental Health, Addictions, and Homelessness.
2. DoKura AGM
3. Webinar: The Power of Nature and Fighting Climate Change
4. Webinar: What's Next? A Guide to Emerging from Chaos and Navigating the Future of Work
5. Webinar: NWO Regional Electricity Planning
6. Webinar: Ontario Engagement Workshop: Monitoring the Impact of Major Projects (Info attached)
7. OEB Policy Day: Charting the Path to Top Quartile Regulator
8. Risk Management: (em)Powering Change, Climate resiliency for a better tomorrow' Symposium

It was determined that ED will send a short report to all CAO/Clerks after each board meeting to summarize discussion. ED will request clerks to include the NOMA report in the report section of the council package agenda at their next Council meeting.

### **Updates from the Municipal Associations/League**

**TBDML** – Rick dumas reported they had a presentation with MTO at their last meeting. They expressed to MTO they wanted to have input in advancement to highways and being a part of planning process, and to have winter program updated. Discussed AGM. AGM will occur in March in Thunder Bay.

**KDMA** – Fred Mota reported discussed AGM will be in January in Dryden and will discuss at that time a new NOMA representative.

**RRDMA** – Deb Ewald reported they had presentation on drought in area. Their Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan was completed by DSSAB for 10 municipalities in region and approved. Discussed by-law officer for smaller municipalities. Their AGM will be January 15<sup>th</sup>.

## 7. ISSUE TRACKER

MOTION: THAT the issue tracker updates submitted in writing be accepted.

Moved by: Mark Vermette, Seconded by: Wendy Brunetta

CARRIED

**Non-urgent Patient Transport** – Nothing submitted

**OMPF** – Nothing submitted

**Policing Costs** – Nothing submitted

**Conservation Lands** – Nothing submitted

**Mining** – Mark Vermette submitted that a few issues remain relevant including Tailings Ponds (how they are taxed) and “Camps” (fly-in/fly-out workforce).

**Nuclear Waste Management Org** – Nothing submitted

**Railway Taxation** – Nothing submitted

**NOSM: Physician Recruitment** – Wendy Brunetta attended The Northern Physician Workforce Advisory Committee meeting on May 25th. Not a lot to report. Most of the discussion focused on the LU/NOSM issue as well as the impacts of COVID on the healthcare sector. She has a 47-page document from the Ontario Hospital Association (which they reviewed) regarding their recommendations for Specialist Services in Ontario. If anyone wants a copy, she can share it with them. Their next meeting is October 12.

**WSER Regulation Dechlorinating Wastewater** – Nothing submitted

## 8. Adjournment

MOTION: THAT there being no further business to discuss the meeting do now adjourn at 12:34 pm.

Moved by: Deb Ewald Seconded by: Gord Griffiths

CARRIED