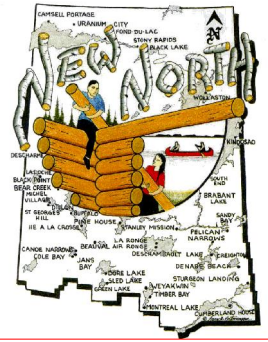


# New North



[www.newnorthsask.ca](http://www.newnorthsask.ca)

June-July 2014

## Mayor and Councillor Meeting Report: Landfills Still a Sore Spot

**Landfills, by their nature, are not very glamorous. In fact, municipalities generally treat them like dirt. Even Sheri Praski, Executive Director of the Northern Lights Chapter of SWANA—who was once in charge of Saskatoon’s landfill—noted that, just about everywhere, landfills are the last place anyone wants to put public money.**

Ministry of Environment officials, including provincial Landfills Manager Sarah Keith, provided the June meeting with their overall “vision for landfills”—words you don’t often hear in close combination to each other—and a frank, and open, dialogue with mayors and councillors followed.

At the moment, one the key issue for municipalities is fines for non-compliance. It would naturally be irresponsible, against the public interest, and probably illegal, for the ministry to officially rule out fines. But the ministry takes a different approach to landfill compliance than it does with, say, water compliance. Reading between the lines, it is probably safe to say that, for now, the ministry won’t fine municipalities for landfills non-compliance. We only need a landfill fire getting out of control for that to change, however.

The ministry’s resurrection of the 2008 report on landfill regionalization in the north, commissioned by New North, is a welcome hint of some kind of long-term strategic thinking by the province. At this point, though, regionalization seems a long way off. And no one has said where the money will come from.

The aforementioned Sheri Praski indicated that SWANA could hold “landfill training”

in the north if there was a desire for that to happen.

Inevitably, landfill issues won’t be quickly resolved in the north.

Overall, the New North AGM and Mayor and Councillor meeting was well attended, with virtually every municipality in the north being represented.

Apart from landfills, other items on the agenda included a discussion of Asset Management by Brad Henry from Northern Municipal Affairs. Elected officials asked about the possibilities for asset management training. Some officials expressed scepticism of the relevance of asset management to the vast majority of northern municipalities, given their size and capacity.

The ministry of Economy continues to maintain a presence at New North meetings, with Doug Horowko from the Northern Economic Development branch providing a detailed rundown of the ministry’s activities in the north.

Also revealed was a little more information about the newly developed Northern Economic Development Council, which hopes to have an officer in place fairly soon.

Finally, Grant St. Germain of the RCMP went over the some of the northern policing issues from an RCMP perspective. Among the concerns brought forward by the communities is the suitability some RCMP personnel placements. St. Germain indicated that the force is very aware of the need to make sure communities receive personnel suited to the challenges of northern policing.

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## **Administrators Conference in the Works for Autumn**

The Administrators Conference is planned for October. Notices will be sent to communities as soon as the agenda is set. At this point, administrators can expect to be schooled in tax enforcement processes. The venue will be La Ronge, like last time.

## **Northern Justice Symposium Most likely in November**

Although early doors, New North is planning to host the next Justice Symposium in late fall, most likely in Prince Albert.

Last year's Northern Symposium for Safer and Healthier Communities was a huge success, but this year we are planning the agenda to have a tighter focus on community policing.

In other event news, we are also in the early stages of planning a Northern Health Conference, which will probably happen early 2015.

## **Long-term Infrastructure Hot Topic For 2014**

Although the federal and provincial governments' announcements surrounding infrastructure funding have disappointed many of us this year, all is not lost.

In the coming months the Long-term Infrastructure Committee, of which New North is a member, will be meeting to figure out possible scenarios for municipalities to raise capital to meet their infrastructure funding needs.

## **SUMA Update on Special Constables**

As we mentioned at the recent meeting, SUMA has told us that the plan they've been working out with the province to initiate a training course for Special Constables is coming to fruition. Training programs at SIAST (most likely) will begin in October, with the unbelievably shiny boots hitting the pavement early 2015. The Special Constables will be able to enforce bylaws as well as traffic infringements.

New North is figuring out what this means for the northern municipalities. Any community will be able to cost-share a SP (as they would a bylaw officer), but host municipalities would need to be able to provide adequate OHS supervision and training to their guy.

Meanwhile, with the feedback from the recent Mayor and Councillor meeting in mind, New North will be putting together some potential scenarios for municipalities to consider for a regional bylaw officer scheme. We hope to have this work completed soon.

## **Beardless Chin Greeted by Local Beard on Visit to Air Ronge**

The Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper, made a surprise visit to Air Ronge late July, meeting local dignitaries including the beard of Mayor Gord Stomp.

As helicopters flew overhead and RCMP boats patrolled the lake front, the cleanly-shaved jowls of the PM announced \$2.5 million from his government for a mining school, to be situated at the Northlands College campus in Air Ronge.

The beard of Gord Stomp welcomed the news, and said that overall, the PM's visit went very well. The visit enabled the beard an opportunity to ask the PM about infrastructure funding for the north.

At his departure for Saskatoon, the PM was seen to be stroking his chin in a thoughtful manner.

Gord Stomp could not be reached for comment.

## Embracing Life: Update

The Embracing Life Resource Mapping meeting was held on June 6, and was attended by over 20 human service providers from varying organizations. With such a good turn out, a lot of valuable information was shared, and the incredibly important discussion about sharing services and working together was started.

The day was spent with each organization presenting their programs and services related to health promotion, suicide prevention, intervention and post-vention, and naturally led into passionate dialogue about how to better meet the needs of individuals and communities in the north. Also during the day, each program and service was mapped out to show its geographical coverage across the north, and each of the agencies shared their resource 'map' of program/service information.

After the in-depth presentations and thorough discussion, participants were asked two questions at the end of the day. The first question asked "What is one thing you will do following today's meeting to better engage or connect service delivery?" Some of the responses included:

*Facilitating grief and trauma workshops for families*

*Improving participation at community-based interagency meetings*

*Connecting with partners and inviting them to meetings and events*

The second question asked participants "How can you help engage or empower communities to take ownership in suicide prevention?" The participants replied:

*Continue as advocate for youth and Elders and engage them in interagency discussions on suicide prevention initiatives*

*Education and training; and sharing information at interagency tables*

*Provide resources to the community to facilitate listening to each other's stories in order to develop the necessary common understanding of our work*

This information, along with further details from the meeting, will be posted very soon on the Embracing Life website, and is free to access and/or download at:

[www.EmbracingLifeSK.com](http://www.EmbracingLifeSK.com)

## Municipal Revenue Sharing Increase for 2015-16

As predicted, the total provincial revenue sharing pool will grow next year, to a total of \$265.3 million, up \$8.3 million.

Revenue sharing dollars rise and fall according to the amount of PST the provincial government collects. In the current year, a combination of lower PST and a one-off correction to how the PST is calculated has led to a fall, which has translated to northern municipalities receiving around \$500,000 less in this year's allocation.

With everything else being equal, municipalities can expect their 2015-16 allocations to be roughly the same as they were in 2013-14.

In the coming years, we can safely predict that allocations will continue to rise. Given the fairly significant shortfalls in capital funding from the federal and provincial government over the next decade, municipalities are going to need it.

## Upcoming Events

Northern Justice Symposium: November

Administrator's Conference: October

### From the CEO: Al Loke

Recently I came across an article in the Western Policy Analyst that really caught my attention.

According to the article, Aboriginal employment growth during the mining boom in western Canada has not been as evenly spread as you might think.

Manitoba and BC lag significantly behind Saskatchewan and Alberta when it comes to employment growth for Aboriginal people.

Saskatchewan, thankfully, is doing very well in this area. From 2007 to 2013, employment growth for the off-reserve population has been at around 17% over the period.

This is good news for municipalities, as increasing employment levels across the board is probably the most pressing issue for northern communities.

But, as the province is telling us, with growth comes challenges.

One of the biggest concerns we hear from the communities is that of people moving out of their communities to access greater levels of services, including education and housing, as soon as they can afford to.

So here is my question: how much are the municipalities being constrained in their growth by the absence, or inadequacy, of services?

My guess is quite a lot.

## New North Executive

### Chair:

Mayor Georgina Jolibois · West

### Board Members:

Councillor Al Sayn (Vice Chair) · Far North

Mayor Gordon Stomp, Village of Air Ronge - Central region

Mayor Val Deschambeault · Eastern Region

Mayor Kelvin Roy · Member at Large

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## New North Mission Statement

**New North - SANC Services Inc.** (Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities) through strength in unity is organized to advocate, negotiate and initiate, improvements for the interests and concerns to the Local, Provincial and Federal Governments to enhance the quality of life for Northern people within the Northern Administration District (NAD) of Saskatchewan.