I recently went golfing with some very smart guys. One of them is the Dean of Science at one of Canada’s universities. Being environmentally conscious, all four of us drove to the golf course north of Victoria in one car. During our drive there and back, we got into a very interesting conversation about the changes needed to reverse the negative effects of global warming. I’m a pessimist and my learned friend is very much an optimist, believing that if there are the right incentives, people will change. See where this is going in relation to workplace behaviours? Not yet? Hold on.

The next day I’m listening to The Sunday Edition on CBC radio and Michael Enright is having a conversation with Irish Senator Feargal Quinn, who happens to own Ireland’s largest chain of supermarkets. When the Irish government imposed a tax on plastic bags, Senator Quinn was opposed. But since then, he’s become a convert and a huge fan of the tax which started in 2002. A mere 15 cents per bag translated into 94% of his customers shunning plastic bags and finding greener, more environmentally sustainable ways of carrying their groceries home. Now he’s trying to convince all European countries and grocers to follow Ireland’s lead.

These events didn’t happen by coincidence. They led me to think about your workplace and how little it takes for people to change from (shall we say) bad behaviours, to good behaviours. Pessimists like me might think, “Oh, that Stephen, he’s never going to change his ways,” or “Stephen’s close to retirement, why bother,” or “It’s not worth the effort – let’s just ignore him and maybe he’ll get the hint.”

Let me suggest that if consumers can change their ways over a measly 15 cents per plastic bag, then it won’t take much to change the behaviour of people at your workplace…if they are given the right incentive.

First, some of the “bad” behaviours, such as inappropriate jokes and comments, are not intentional at all, and once explained that they’re out of line, people will stop the bad stuff. Second, even when people do know what they’re doing is inappropriate, a simple comment from you can and will make a world of difference. If you don’t say anything, they know full well this means they’ve got the okay to keep on doin’ what they’ve been doin’. Third, speaking up and making positive change at work gives others the opportunity to speak up themselves. If they see a workplace leader put a stop to inappropriate comments, employees will feel much more confident to say something, even when the boss isn’t around. It becomes catchy.

There is one more part of the equation that needs to be address. Consequences. When Sen-
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Some Pain, Lots of Gain
cont’d from page 1

ator Quinn first heard of the proposed plastic bag tax, he told the government minister all the things he and other grocers would do to get around it, such as paying the tax on behalf of their customers. At every suggestion, the minister came up with plans to counter anyone trying to get around their attempt to reduce plastic bags in the landfills. In other words, real consequences if they didn’t comply with the law. At first, Quinn wasn’t happy, but he quickly got on side and realized that without consequences, it might not work.

At your workplace, vacuous words and threats are meaningless. I’m not saying anyone has to get disciplined, because if you lay out clearly what will happen with continued bad behaviour, people realize it’s not worth it. However, if someone calls your bluff, you better be ready with at least initial consequences. You don’t want to go overboard and violate policies and common law, but you want to make it stick. When we were young and our parents threatened that we’d go home if we acted up while out for dinner or elsewhere, we caught on pretty quick if it was an idol threat or the real thing. Lessons we learned as a kid are still appropriate as an adult. Employees will figure out quickly if you’re serious or not.

So the next time you want to change negative behaviours at work, try this:

• Identify the behaviour that needs changing
• Give an “incentive” to change the behaviour (positive or negative)
• Spell out consequences and carry through if the behaviour doesn’t change.

After a weekend of hanging out with people much smarter than me and listening to people on the radio much smarter than me, I’ve must have learned something. I won’t be a pushover, but I think I will be more optimistic that people can change, either on the environmental front, or the workplace front, if they’re given the right incentives.

Stephen Hammond, B.A, LL.B, is a speaker, trainer and author working in the field of workplace human rights. His book Managing Human Rights At Work: 101 Practical Tips to Prevent Human Rights Disasters, along with other tips and articles are available on his website stephenhammond.ca. Contact Stephen at 866-685-8338 or Stephen@stephenhammond.ca.

TeamWorks Program Alive and Well

Now in its 8th year, the LGMA TeamWorks program is an innovative coaching and mentoring program that provides British Columbia’s local governments access to additional, specialized resources, adding a new level of service to the longstanding tradition of information sharing.

Designed to enhance the informal partnership programs that already exist, TeamWorks allows local governments to seek and provide assistance, and share resources.

TeamWorks can provide coaching and mentoring expertise in a wide variety of local government fields including: Strategic Planning, Civic Beautification, Council/Staff Relations, Information Technology, Human Resources, Transportation, Engineering and Public Works, Financial Management, Change Management, Land Use Planning, Environmental and Emergency Programs, and Community Safety and Services.

The experience of combining the user and the resource provider together in a hands-on environment will not only efficiently solve the problem, but will provide unique leadership and training opportunities for staff.

The Process...
TeamWorks is simple and easy to access in all BC communities. Here is the basic process to become involved:

• A local government has a challenge that requires coaching or mentoring assistance
• That local government “user” of the service makes a request to the LGMA, regardless of where they may be geographically located in BC
• Working with professionals from potential “resource” providers, the LGMA will attempt to match the user with the most appropriate participating resource provider in another local government
• The user and resource providers enter into an agreement and carry out the project. The user would only be responsible for direct costs associated with the project such as travel, accommodation and materials. The assessed costs may be adjusted as the project evolves to reflect administrative workloads.

TeamWorks is truly a unique, innovative coaching program that originally started as an informal offer from one Chief Administrative Officer to another. Today, the program has evolved into a results-driven assistance provider with many opportunities in the future.
LGM A Civics Project Participates with Law Courts Education Society in Assessing Social Studies Curriculum in BC

With civic elections just around the corner we are very aware of the importance of civics education to develop the good citizens required to provide quality candidates to serve local government jurisdictions throughout the province.

A free society must rely on the knowledge, skill, and virtue of its citizens and those they elect to public office. Civics education is the primary way our citizens acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for informed and engaged citizenship. Since the late 1960s, vote participation and political engagement among young adults have been declining rapidly. A number of studies have been conducted to determine the underlying basis for these changes. We have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of young people choosing public administration as a career. Surveys across Canada are showing a lack of interest in politics, younger voters and an increase in young persons who are not voting at all. Those are good reasons to formalize civics education in our schools.

The Law Courts Education Society of BC has launched a project called BC Law and Citizenship Curriculum Assessment in order to examine strategies to ensure that students graduate from secondary school with the skills and knowledge necessary to be active citizens. As part of this initiative the LGMA was given an opportunity to participate on the LCES strategic working committee along with a representative from Ministry of Community Development and Local Government Leadership Academy.

...local government practitioners can play a key role in changing students’ attitudes by providing them with a better understanding of what makes a “complete community.”

This provides an excellent opportunity to help influence the local government component of active citizen participation. We will be given a chance to play a key role with implementation of a toolkit or teaching guide to assist social studies teachers in schools throughout the province.

What are we teaching our students about civics and citizenship?

Last year’s Ministry of Education Social Studies Curriculum Needs Assessment (Grades 8 and 12) discussed issues that need to be addressed concerning civics and citizenship in the current curriculum (see Executive Summary at bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/reports/). On the upside the study acknowledged focus on citizen education as the central goal of the social studies curriculum is appropriate and should continue. There is a growing trend toward the use of community engagement and active citizenship projects to take social studies learning beyond the classroom and connect school with students’ lives and the community. However, many students find social studies boring and do not see the relevance of course content to their own lives. This perception may negatively affect their attitudes toward historical inquiry, government processes and involvement as engaged citizens in society. Fewer than a quarter (22%) of educators feel that students have ample opportunity in required social studies courses to practice active citizenship, and many feel that the curriculum does not adequately help students feel connected to Canadian politics or develop the attitudes and abilities to be active participants in a democratic society. We are optimistic that local government practitioners can play a key role in changing students’ attitudes by providing them with a better understanding of what makes a “complete community.”

Why are BC students not graduating with the requisite knowledge to be informed citizens?

In the current system students are required to take Social Studies K through 10. In order to graduate, each student must take one of Social Studies 11, Civic Studies 11, or BC First Nations Studies 12. These courses as they exist do contain some elements of civics, law and citizenship, but in themselves do not cover enough to enable students to become informed citizens. Through this project we will be inserting content to ensure that all students, regardless of which of the three courses they take, will gain the knowledge required to be active citizens.

Revised curriculum materials will be ready for feedback from interested parties by fall 2008 through the project website bccitizenship.ca. Also, the BC Social Studies Teachers’ Association fall conference (October 24, 2008) will include workshops on civics and citizenship. We would encourage you to view the website which provides links to other civic and citizenship programs and provide any comments to your LGMA representative RickBeauchamp@telus.net.
Local Governments No Longer Local Boards of Health (Bill 23)

If you have not had a look at the new Health Act (Bill 23) you should as it could have far reaching implications for your local government jurisdiction.

The following are some excerpts from an article prepared by Colin Stewart of Staples McDannold Stewart, Barristers and Solicitors (sms.bc.ca). The previous Health Act of BC gave most municipalities the powers of a local board of health with statutory authority to make orders to deal with certain specific health and sanitation issues. This role has now been eliminated and under the new act, orders may be made by the Minister and by Health Officers and now establishes a scheme for the creation and implementation of public health plans. These plans can address the status of health of the population, including public health surveillance and monitoring and prevention and mitigation of the adverse effects of diseases, disabilities, syndromes, injuries and health hazards.

The minister can order public bodies, such as municipalities, regional districts, as well as health authorities, to make plans dealing with a wide variety of health related issues. The public health plan can be made to override other local government planning processes such as regional growth strategies, official community plans and servicing plans.

Local governments are also required to consider advice or information provided to local government by a health officer. In addition we will be required to designate one of our members, or an officer or employee of the local government as the local government liaison for the purpose of the new act and send a notice of the designation to the regional health authority in its area.

Bill 23 is drafted in a way that permits a more comprehensive and top down management of health issues and health crises, with local governments being tasked with the responsibility of taking an active role with respect to emerging and chronic public health issues. It would appear that the minister could download responsibilities for catastrophic events such as flu epidemics to local governments making them responsible for emergency evacuation and other financial obligations which are currently provided for by the province.
Every three years November brings the sweet promise of political change. While change is often welcomed by the residents who elect their prospective mayor and councillors, integrating new ideas and philosophies into an existing municipality can often cause conflict.

New councillors are generally passionate about promoting change otherwise they wouldn’t be running to represent their communities. They usually have lots of ideas. The challenge is existing management teams are dealing with practical limitations, budgetary constraints and limited resources. In order for both parties to productively work together they need to be able to have difficult, yet constructive conversations both publicly and privately.

One way to accomplish this is to implement communication guidelines from the beginning that teach councillors and management staff what the acceptable language is when approaching a colleague about a difficult issue. Similarly both councillors and management staff should know how to receive constructive feedback from their co-workers without getting defensive. Creating a common language sets the standard for a respectful environment and it encourages councillors and staff to address issues as they arise in an appropriate way. In the long run it generally improves productivity, employee retention and attraction.

A perfect way to stress the importance of clear, respectful communication is to take councillors and senior management staff on an off-site retreat together during the first weeks of integration.

Away from the workplace they can collaboratively establish the written rules of communication. For instance, a rule could be if you are both bothered by a comment or action of a co-worker you must inform that co-worker within one week of the incident. That way he or she has the opportunity to correct the behaviour. Setting the steps of how this communication should take place also prepares both the person addressing the difficult issue and the person receiving the difficult feedback. Everyone can make a difference so long as they have the proper leadership to guide them.

When it comes to running a community there are always going to be diverse viewpoints and misunderstandings. It’s having the skills to communicate in a respectful, yet constructive way that sets the good municipalities apart from the great.

Judy Brooks is the Managing Director of ProActive ReSolutions Inc., a global leader in building respectful workplaces through prevention and incident management programs. PRI’s Conflict Management Specialists frequently train municipalities, local government organizations and top companies across the globe on how to communicate respectfully. For more information visit: www.proactive-resolutions.com or call 1-877-585-9933.
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University of Victoria
I was reading just this morning that the Atlantic storm season normally runs from June 1 to November 30. Quoting from a message from a Florida electric company to its customers, “We know from past experience that these terrible storms can be unpredictable and devastating in their power and ability to cause damage”.

The article reminded me that we here in British Columbia are also now in that special season that comes every three years and while not usually resulting in devastating damage (some might argue that!), their outcome can certainly be unpredictable. Of course I’m talking about the general municipal elections that will take place in November. Arguably, our “silly season” (so-called by some) got under way much earlier in the year, and by the time you read this, it will be in full swing as potential candidates consider whether they will file nomination papers by October 10. It won’t end until sometime after 8:00 pm on general voting day, November 15.

At the staff level, we must remain neutral and professional and provide assistance and information to all candidates whether they are a seasoned incumbent or an eager first timer. I know from past personal experience that this can sometimes be challenging, particularly if a given individual has been a real thorn in your side in the time prior to the election.

...we must remain neutral and professional and provide assistance and information to all candidates...

Executive Director’s Report

by Tom MacDonald, Executive Director, LGMA
So what are the things that you, as professional local government managers consider when you think about your potential incoming councils/boards? Most of us have had the opportunity to work with excellent dedicated elected officials who put the needs of the community ahead of their own and work as true partners with professional staff to provide the best outcomes for their citizens. But as is always the case, there are some instances where the relationship between the elected officials and senior management is strained.

At the recent MATI 1 session in Victoria, the 80 participants were asked to identify what they thought were the causes of poor council/board/staff relations and how things might be improved. The first list is lengthy, but provides an interesting insight into the relationships between appointed and elected officials. Of note, is that these characterizations were not specifically directed at elected officials as it was recognized that in some cases, the problem may be with the staff rather than the elected officials. The second list provides some insights into what MATI participants felt were best practices for improving the relationships between elected and appointed officials.

None of the following is rocket science however the two lists may provide food for thought as you prepare yourself for the elections (and their outcomes) ahead. Good luck with everything and may you have no recounts!

### 1. What are the causes of poor Council/Board/Staff relations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict of interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secrecy</td>
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<td>Lack of trust</td>
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<td>Power struggles</td>
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<td>Elections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intimidation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unreasonable expectations of staff</td>
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<td>Personal agendas</td>
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<td>Not understanding each other’s roles</td>
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<td>Criticism</td>
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<td>Grand standing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ego</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff cannot say no</td>
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<tr>
<td>External factors (personal life)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playing politics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divided Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glass ceiling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdated norms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two way lack of respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of community awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council speaks badly of staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resentment of actions and decisions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. What are some suggested best practices to improve Council/Board/Staff relations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Best Practices</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective meeting management training (for elected officials)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not bring up personal things in public</td>
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<td>Be proactive with information sharing</td>
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<td>Fireside chats with CAO and Committees</td>
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<td>Resolution outcome action sheet (good follow up after council/board meetings)</td>
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<td>Council orientation workshop (goal setting)</td>
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<td>Council and staff trade jobs for a day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respectful two way communication</td>
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<td>CAO buffers senior staff</td>
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<td>Share results of MATI sessions with Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relaxed social gathering with a facilitator</td>
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<td>Better communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open door policy for Council and Department Heads</td>
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<td>Four day retreat</td>
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<td>Global staff meetings (same message at the same time)</td>
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<td>Group hugs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify common goals</td>
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<td>Provision for adequate staffing</td>
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<tr>
<td>No surprises</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff recognition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code of Ethics at meetings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Plan Your Week in 30 Minutes**

Experts say that you need only 30 minutes to plan your entire week. How to do it? Follow the OATS formula.

**O: Objectives**

What results to you want to see by the end of the week? Write them down and rank them.

**A: Activities**

What do you have to do to achieve your goals? List the necessary activities, and put them in sequence.

**T: Time**

How much time will each activity require? To plan realistically, allow yourself more time than you think you will actually need. This gives you flexibility if unexpected problems develop.

**S: Schedule**

Look at your calendar and decide when you can do each activity. Most people underestimate the power of a schedule, but you won’t get anything accomplished if you don’t schedule time to do it.

Source: The Manager’s Intelligence Report
Almost 300 delegates, guests, partners, exhibitors and sponsors attended the 69th annual conference of the LGMA at the Civic Centre in Prince George from June 17-19, 2008. This year’s theme of “Politics and Professionalism” reflected the diverse array of skills that are required of local government managers. Whether it was a keynote presentation from WestJet founder Don Bell or astronaut Mike Mullane, a session focused on operational efficiencies or dealing with stakeholders, the value and importance of relationships was a common theme throughout the conference. Delegates took advantage of the opportunity to connect with colleagues and friends at the President’s Reception or annual banquet and informally over coffee or during unscheduled time.

Congratulations to the organizing committee who worked tirelessly to pull together an interesting and informative conference and thanks to the community of Prince George and its friendly and helpful staff at the Civic Centre for helping make the conference a success.

Outgoing President Elsie Lemke

Greetings from New Zealand exchange partner Susan Jones from Gore, New Zealand

Elsie Lemke, Minister Ida Chong (then Minister of Community Services)

Incoming President Isabell Hadford

Incoming President Isabell Hadford and her trusty dog sled team – left to right Ron Poole, Gerry Kingston, Isabell Hadford, Jim Chute, Gord Horth
Conference Awards

President’s Award – Ron Poole

Ron Poole, Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Terrace, received the President’s Award for his long-standing commitment to professional development programming and training that has benefitted members across British Columbia.

Professional Award for Leadership – Randall (Randy) Rose

Randall (Randy) Rose, Chief Administrative Officer for the District of Lake Country, received the Professional Service Award for Leadership. The LGMA recognized Randy’s 33 years of local government service and his commitment to instilling a culture of teamwork with both staff and elected officials.

Professional Award for Innovation – Emanuel Machado

Emanual Machado, Director of Corporate Planning and Sustainable Community Development for the City of Dawson Creek, received the Professional Service Award for Innovation. Emanuel has been a leader in both the City and other local governments across British Columbia for his work on reducing the municipality’s use of traditional energy through the use of solar energy.

Distinguished Member Award – Rick Beauchamp

Rick Beauchamp, Director of Administrative Services for the District of West Vancouver, received the Distinguished Member Award for his contributions to the LGMA and its chapters through his service on numerous committees and involvement with initiatives that have benefitted members across British Columbia.

Retirement Recognition – Linn Teetzel

Linn Teetzel, Coordinator of Local Government Programs at Capilano College who is retiring was recognized for her outstanding innovation and leadership in public administration and education in British Columbia and through her commitment in the development of a comprehensive local government management competency-training program that is recognized for excellence throughout the province and beyond.

Future LGMA Annual Conference Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>June 9-11</td>
<td>Vancouver Island Conference Centre, Nanaimo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>May 18-20</td>
<td>Whistler, Fairmont Chateau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>May 17-19</td>
<td>Penticton Trade &amp; Convention Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>May 14-17</td>
<td>Victoria Conference Centre</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Professional Service Awards – Presented for service to the LGMA Board

Suzanne Gresham
Joni Heinrich
Jason Johnson
John Malcolm
Municipal Pension Plan – Post-Retirement Group Benefits

by Kenneth Bayne, Chair, Municipal Pension Board of Trustees

Many municipal councils have received correspondence from Municipal Pension Plan retirees, asking that councils pass a resolution in support of increased funding for group health benefits. The requested resolution states:

“Therefore be it resolved that the Provincial Government and the Union of BC Municipalities be directed to increase funding of 1/2 of 1% of payroll for an account specifically designated for Group Health Benefits to assist the Municipal Pension retirees to continue their efforts to maintain good health.”

Funding for the current group health benefit premiums offered to Municipal Pension Plan retirees has been an issue for several years. These subsidies are funded from employer contributions to the Inflation Adjustment Account that provides annual inflation adjustments to retirees. The board does not have the authority to increase these contribution rates and did not receive support from the plan partners to do so. As a result, the board was required to make decisions about the proportion of existing employer contributions that would be allocated to an increasingly costly subsidy program and to the provision of inflation protection for retirees.

Throughout the board’s extensive review and stakeholder consultation process, the Municipal Pension Retirees Association made representations to the Municipal Pension Plan. These efforts were directed at influencing the decisions of the board in favour of maintaining subsidies and coverage. In 2003, and again in 2007, the board made decisions that, among other things, put a cap on the amount of employer contributions going to group benefit subsidies and on the amount of subsidy that would be available to individual retirees. These were not popular decisions, however, within its existing authority the board believed they were necessary and appropriate.

While retirees and their spouses and dependents continue to have access to extended health and dental coverage, the board determined that its priority was financial support for retirees only. As a result, premium subsidies for spouses and dependents were eliminated. In addition, the board established a limit of 0.8% of active member salaries for premium subsidies.

As a result of these decisions, the Municipal Pension Board of Trustees expects to be able to maintain the current level of premium subsidies for retirees until 2011 or 2012. After that, subsidies will be reduced to a level that fits within the funding limit of 0.8% of active member salaries. The current maximum subsidy is 75% of the premium cost for retirees with 10 or more years of pensionable service.

The current initiative of the Municipal Pension Retirees Association is to convince the plan partners to agree to increased contributions to support the benefit plan. As the Municipal Pension Board of Trustees does not have the authority to increase contribution rates, these efforts are directed at the Plan Employer Partner, jointly the Provincial Government and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities.

Although creation of a separate account or trust was considered during the review of the benefit programs, the Municipal Pension Board of Trustees has not agreed to support this proposal. Without additional funding, there would not be enough money to solve the fundamental problem, which is that the costs of these benefits outstrip the funding available to pay for them. Moreover,

### Inflation Adjustment Account

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indexing &amp; Post Retirement Group Benefits</th>
<th>Facts &amp; Figures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% of active member salaries (members)</td>
<td>$63.7 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net employer contribution to the IAA</td>
<td>$26.7 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.42% of active salaries)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total IAA contribution</td>
<td>$90.4 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indexing provided on January 1, 2008</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of 2.5% Indexing</td>
<td>$174.3 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PRGB Program Funding, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Retiree Premiums</th>
<th>Plan Subsidies</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extended Health</td>
<td>$16.8 million</td>
<td>$24.3 million</td>
<td>$41.1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental</td>
<td>$ 8.3 million</td>
<td>$12.8 million</td>
<td>$21.1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$25.1 million</td>
<td>$37.1 million</td>
<td>$62.2 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

58% of the employer IAA contribution was used for PRGB subsidies

The total cost of post-retirement group benefits (claims and administration costs) was $62.2 million, just under 1% of active member salaries.
investing relatively small amounts of money would not produce sufficient returns to offset the rapidly increasing costs of post-retirement group benefits and the anticipated increase in retirees who could draw from it. Finally, the board was of the view that if additional contributions were agreed to by the plan partners, there should be a discussion of whether the additional funding should be directed to providing additional assurance that inflation protection can be provided to retirees in the future or to providing additional subsidies for group health benefits to retirees.

Those municipalities being asked to support the resolution proposed by the Municipal Pension Retirees Association should contact UBCM for further information and guidance on how to proceed.

Listening

Why do people have two ears and one mouth? It’s probably because we are meant to listen twice as much as we talk. Or is it because listening is so much more difficult than talking? Listening shows that you care, that you have empathy and are prepared to be influenced. It also allows you to understand where the person you are communicating with is coming from. Here are the golden rules of listening:

1. Give the other person your undivided attention. Don’t do other work or take calls while you are listening.
2. Talk less or don’t talk at all. This will force the other person to speak.
3. Find a quiet place to listen. Avoid places that are noisy or have other distractions.
4. Listen to be influenced. Concentrate. Don’t allow your mind to be absorbed with developing rebuttals.
5. Let people finish their points. Only when they keep repeating the same point should you interrupt and indicate your understanding.
6. Show that you are interested. Do this by nodding or periodically saying yes and leaning forward.
7. Maintain eye contact without staring.
8. Show positive body language. Lean forward. Look interested. Face the person who is talking to you. Smile occasionally.
9. Ask for clarification if you are not sure you have clearly understood a message. Or summarize your understanding by saying, “So what I hear you saying is .... Is that right?”
10. Ask open-ended questions. Such questions help get at what people feel, rather than eliciting responses you want to hear.
11. Be empathetic. Even if you disagree with another’s views and sentiments, you are learning; try to see things from their perspective.
12. Be patient. Some people take a little more time to articulate their thoughts. Wait until they have completed their points of view before responding.
13. Watch for non-verbal reactions during the conversation. Most of what people think doesn’t come out of their mouths. Observe their facial expressions, posture, gestures, and eye movements to evaluate what they are thinking.
14. Keep pace with the speaker. Don’t jump to conclusions or fill in the gaps.
15. Allow people to finish their own sentences. Don’t assume you know what they’re going to say.
16. Let others finish before you confirm your understanding. Train yourself to count slowly to five before interjecting or responding.
17. Learn to let short, comfortable silences descend on a conversation. Silence encourages the other person to fill the void.
The Municipal Fiscal Imbalance: What Next?

by Karen Levitt, Director of Business Planning and Strategy, City of Vancouver

In undertaking the research for a recent report to Vancouver City Council on this issue, we came across a number of excellent reports authored by a diverse set of organisations that includes the Conference Board of Canada, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, TD Economics, the Canada West Foundation, the Council of the Federation, the Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance at the Munk Centre for International Studies, among others. While these authors have taken varied approaches to exploring the issue, and have proposed different solutions, their conclusions are strikingly uniform; they consistently and credibly demonstrate that the current financial structure of Canadian municipalities is not sustainable.

Their message: There is a serious, systemic issue with the way Canadian municipalities are funded. Because municipalities are required to maintain balanced operating budgets and to borrow within defined constraints, while both orders of government provide public services to the same taxpayer, the term municipal fiscal imbalance refers to these relationships, specifically between municipalities and senior governments.

If you take a moment to scan the Union of British Columbia’s 2007 Annual Convention minutes, you’ll see that somewhere between a quarter and a third of the resolutions endorsed last year are in some way related to the municipal fiscal imbalance issue. This is clearly an issue that is on our (and our constituents’) minds. These resolutions come in the form of requests for increased ongoing senior government revenue-sharing, senior government funding for specific programs, services and infrastructure, better communication and feedback mechanisms, and clarifications of roles and responsibilities related to various service areas.

Here is a concise definition of the municipal fiscal imbalance, for those of you that don’t have one handy. A vertical fiscal imbalance exists when the “… fiscal capacity of one order of government is insufficient to sustain its spending responsibilities while the fiscal capacity of another order of government is greater than is needed to sustain its spending obligations, while both orders of government provide public services to the same taxpayer.” The term municipal fiscal imbalance refers to these relationships, specifically between municipalities and senior governments.
ple in policing and social planning. Downloading is only one part of this story, among other factors like changing social environments, expensive regulatory standards and greater urbanisation.

Where to go from here? We need to evolve the dialogue from one that centres on downloading (whether real, perceived, direct, or indirect), to one that is focused on designing and implementing a comprehensive, long-term solution for local governments in British Columbia. For this to work, it must be a collaborative undertaking, from start to finish, with local governments and the provincial government working together, to first agree on what our objectives are, and then develop and implement a set of concrete, meaningful actions that address these objectives.

Circling back to those September 2007 UBCM resolutions I mentioned at the beginning of this piece, we must be clear that the solution is not simply about securing more money for local governments. There are four distinct elements to a holistic, sustainable solution, and updating our funding structure is only one of them. Equally important are: a clarification of roles and responsibilities in specific service areas; mechanisms for local governments to provide meaningful information and feedback to senior governments relating to certain service areas, without having to shoulder the full cost and/or service delivery responsibility; and, a commitment to our own responsibility to continually strive to deliver the best value to our taxpayers and ratepayers.

In June of this year, Vancouver City Council requested that the UBCM establish a Commission made up of impartial experts in the field of municipal finance and policy, to deliver a set of practical, implementable solutions that address the municipal fiscal imbalance issue in BC, by Spring 2009. We believe this will be an effective next step in moving toward better “municipal fiscal balance” in BC, and look forward to participating in this venture.


A New Look for the LGMA Newsletter?
Tell us what you think – Get free stuff!

LGMA members will have already seen some of the results of a marketing and communications study that was done for the association by Redbird Communications earlier this year. The first steps taken included the creation of a new corporate logo and the development of materials for recruiting new professionals into local government careers. Soon to come will be the revamping of the LGMA website and the creation of new membership cards which will be distributed with the 2009 membership renewal forms. Regular members will now be given preferential treatment in respect to rates on workshops and educational opportunities as well as early access (before non-members) to registered programs that tend to fill quickly.

One of the key communication tools of the LGMA is the Chapter 290 Newsletter (which you are now holding) which is published four times per year. We would be very interested in hearing from you if you feel the newsletter meets your expectations in terms of content and format. For example, in terms of content we know that pretty well everyone pays attention to the Members’ Pages at the back of each issue where the latest news on who’s going where is published. But what about the other parts of the newsletter? Is anything missing? Should we be including more community news such as a feature on a particular municipality or regional district? Maybe each issue should include an in-depth profile on one of our members? What about providing a soap-box where each month to let

And how about the name? Chapter 290 was originally chosen as the name of the newsletter to recognize the section of the Revised Statutes of British Columbia that dealt with local government. Many amendments later and at least since 1996, that section of the statutes now refers to the Mineral Land Tax Act. Accordingly, we would also welcome your suggestions as to what a new name for the newsletter might be.

Here’s how you can give input. Send an email with your comments, opinions, bouquets, critiques, etc. to dpatterson@lgma.ca. As for free stuff, anyone who takes the time to give us your thoughts before September 12, 2008 will be rewarded with one of our new LGMA mugs and some very tasty Callebaut Belgian Chocolates.
Help Wanted: Your Assistance Needed in Reporting 2008 Election Results
by Todd Pugh, CivicInfo BC

This fall, CivicInfo BC and our partners at the UBCM and Ministry of Community Development, will once again be seeking assistance from Chief Election Officers in reporting unofficial election on November 15.

This year, we have constructed a new online system for collecting information: civicinfo.bc.ca/election2008.

In September, Chief Election Officers will receive a letter containing a password to access the system, and simple instructions on how to enter information.

To make results reporting easier, we will also be working with CEOs to enter candidate names into our database in advance of the election, immediately following the close of the nomination period. This will result in an “all candidates” list for the entire province.

On election night, results from across the province will be available through the CivicInfo BC website (civicinfo.bc.ca), and through an online report generator that will be made available to the public. Similar reporting tools were heavily used by the public and by the media in 2002 and 2005. Because so many people will be watching, and because many news outlets will be using our system to gather information, your community’s assistance in reporting results as soon as possible after the polls close is greatly appreciated.

CivicInfo BC and its partners would like to thank all CEOs in advance for their support and co-operation. If you have questions, or would like any additional information about the 2008 Election Reporting System, please call our office in Victoria at 250-383-4898, or e-mail info@civicinfo.bc.ca.
At the end of August Rick Beauchamp retired from his position as Director of Administrative Services with the District of West Vancouver.

Rick started his career in 1967 with the Town of North Kamloops in the accounting department and worked his way through the ranks holding many senior positions including Chief Financial Officer, City Clerk, Director of Administrative Services, Deputy CAO, and CAO with some of the fastest growing and challenged local governments in the province. In addition to West Vancouver, he has served the Squamish-Lillooet RD, City of Abbotsford, District of Abbotsford, City of Kelowna, City of Revelstoke, Kootenay Boundary RD, City of Castlegar, Town of Kinnard, City of Trail, City of Kamloops and the Town of North Kamloops.

His career travels have included an amazing five amalgamations and restructurings which led to his working in a changing environment most of his working career, which he says “has helped him gather an appreciation of the many unique facets of local government”.

Over the years Rick has been extensively involved in promoting and advancing local government professionalism and training. He has, for many years, been involved with the LGMA serving on many committees and MATI programs. As well, he has published the association’s newsletter for over 20 years. At the chapter level he served as president of the Lower Mainland chapter. At this past year’s LGMA conference he was acknowledged by his peers by being presented with a “Distinguished Member Award” for exemplary contribution to the local government profession over the years.

Rick is married to Chris and has three grown daughters and one granddaughter who will now see a lot more of him. Upon his retirement he plans to continue to be active in local government in some capacity such as consulting, and wants to fulfill a life long dream of skiing every ski hill and golfing every golf course in BC.
Moving On

Members’ Page

Tracey Arthur, City Clerk, City of White Rock (formerly Deputy City Clerk, City of Langley)

Larry Burk, Deputy CAO, Village of Harrison Hot Springs (formerly Director of Development Services, District of Kent)

Martin Dalsin, CAO, Village of Chase (formerly Clerk/Administrator, Village of Cache Creek)

Jay Gilbert, City Clerk, City of Coquitlam (formerly Strategic Advisor, Recordkeeping Policy and Operations, Library and Archives Canada)

Kelly Harms, Deputy City Clerk/Information and Privacy Coordinator, City of Abbotsford (formerly Records Coordinator, City of Abbotsford)

Alan Harris, CAO/Director of Corporate Administration, District of Sicamous (formerly CFO, NORD)

Curt Kingsley, Manager of Corporate Services, District of North Saanich

Lisa Landry, General Manager of Economic Viability, Resort Municipality of Whistler (formerly Manager of Fiscal Planning, Resort Municipality of Whistler)

David Neufeld, Records Coordinator, City of Abbotsford (formerly Media Services Librarian, Vancouver School Board)

Larry Randle, Manager of Corporate Administration, Township of Esquimalt (formerly Director of Corporate Administration Services, City of Fernie)

Sonia Santarossa, Manager, Strategic Projects City of Coquitlam (formerly City Clerk, City of Coquitlam)

Tom Stevens, City Manager, City of Campbell River (formerly Corporate Services Director, City of Campbell River)

Robin Stringer, CAO, Municipal Finance Authority of BC (formerly Director of Finance, TransLink)

“The expectation of a CAO is much like that of an umpire – you are expected to be perfect the first day on the job and improve every day thereafter.”

Local Government Management Association of British Columbia (LGMA)

• NCMAA Fall Conference, September 9-11, 2008, Chances Convention Centre, Prince Rupert

• TOLGMA Annual Conference, September 10-12, 2008, Delta Sun Peaks Resort, Kamloops

• Women in Leadership Program, October 1-2, 2008, Delta Vancouver Airport, Richmond

• Public Design and Construction Procurement for Local Governments and Public Organizations Workshop, October 2, 2008, Prince George Civic Centre, Prince George

• MATI 5: Community Planning, October 5-10, Lake Okanagan Resort, Kelowna

• Clerks and Corporate Officers Forum, October 15-17, 2008, Delta Sun Peaks Resort, Kamloops

• West Kootenay and Kootenay Boundary joint chapter meeting, October 23-24, 2008 Nakusp

• Building a Business Case Workshop, October 23, 2008, Ramada Hotel and Conference Centre, Kelowna

• Building a Business Case Workshop, October 24, 2008, Envision Credit Union Head Office, Langley

• Administrative Assistants’ Conference, October 28-29, 2008, Delta Ocean Pointe, Victoria

• MATI 3: Advanced Communication, April 19-24, 2009

• MATI 4: Managing People, May 10-15, 2009

• MATI 2: Leadership, May 31-June 5, 2009

• LGMA Annual Conference, June 8-12, 2009, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, Nanaimo

• International City Management Association (ICMA) Annual Conference, September 21-24, 2008, Richmond, VA

• Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Annual Conference, September 22-26, 2008, Penticton

• Municipal Finance Authority of BC (MFABC) Semi-Annual Meeting, September 23, 2008, Penticton (in conjunction with the UBCM)

• Government Finance Officers Association Western Canadian Annual Conference, October 8-10, 2008, Empress Hotel, Victoria

• International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) Annual Conference, May 19-23, 2009, Chicago, IL

• Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Annual Conference, June 5-8, 2009, Whistler

• Government Finance Officers Association Annual Conference, June 28-July 1, 2009, Seattle, WA

Upcoming Events

Promoting professional management and leadership excellence in local government
Don Moore Remembered

It is with sadness we report that Don Moore passed away on July 4, 2008.

Don grew up in Creston, BC and graduated from UBC Civil Engineering. He worked for Transport Canada after graduating, and then owned his own construction company in Prince George. He took an engineering position with the City of Vancouver in the early 1990s, and in 1996 went to the Corporation of Delta, as the Utilities and Construction Manager. In 2002 he left local government for the position of Environmental Engineer with Wesbild, a land development company in Coquitlam.

During his time in local government, Don attended MATI 2 in 2001, returning to MATI in 2002 and 2003, as part of a simulation exercise, “A day in the life of a City Manager.”

He is survived by his wife Camy and his two children, Corben and Jennifer.

“The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.”

Theodore Roosevelt
2008/2009 LGMA Board of Directors

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CAO
District of Clearwater

1st VICE PRESIDENT
Tim Wood
Administrator
District of Saanich

2nd VICE PRESIDENT
Warren Waycheshen
CAO
District of MacKenzie

SECRETARY-TREASURER
Kathy Young
Director of Finance
District of Lillooet

DIRECTOR AT LARGE
Alberto De Feo
CAO
City of Williams Lake

DIRECTOR AT LARGE
John MacLean
CAO
Kootenay Boundary RD

PAST PRESIDENT
Elsie Lemke
CAO
District of Peachland

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Town of Golden

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Victor Kumar
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VANCOUVER ISLAND
Mark Brennan
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Town of View Royal

NORTH CENTRAL
Sheryl Worthing
Director of Financial Services
Village of Burns Lake

LOWER MAINLAND
Kelly Ridley
Deputy Director, Corporate Administration
City of Mission

THOMPSON OKANAGAN
Liz Cornwall
Deputy Clerk
Thompson Nicola RD

Treaty Update: TFN Community Land Use

Chief Kim Baird of the Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN) released the band’s draft community land use plan outlining ideas for community housing, a commercial enterprise area, industrial development, tidal marsh and bluff reserves, and farmland in the Agricultural Land Reserve. The plan is based on sustainable development and building design and construction will follow greenhouse principles that will take advantage of cutting edge green technology, said Baird. Development would take place over the next 20 years and includes all treaty land and properties already owned by band members and relocation of some may be necessary to make room for development. Also included in the long-term plan is a provision for a “Hotel/Tourism” project, which Baird said could involve a casino, but is currently not high on the band’s priority list. The plan must be deemed in compliance with Metro Vancouver’s Livable Region Strategic Plan and then, following consultation meetings, ratified by TFN members.

Source: FVTAX Monitor, July, 2008

2009 LGMA Annual Conference
June 8-12, Nanaimo