

## Who We Are

The UNSM is a non-profit organization that has represented the Provincial interests of municipal governments across Nova Scotia since 1906. Total membership is 412 elected officials representing all 54 municipalities.

Municipal interests are represented through three caucuses—a Regional Caucus, Rural Caucus and Towns Caucus. The Board of Directors is comprised of twelve municipal elected officials and one appointed non-voting member from the Association of Municipal Administrators.

The Executive is comprised of the President, Vice-President, Immediate Past President and Chairs from the Rural, Town and Regional Caucuses. A staff of five works on behalf of the Board of Directors and general membership.

The UNSM hosts an Annual Conference to give its members an opportunity to present issues of concern through resolutions and to provide training opportunities through various workshops and seminars. An annual Spring Workshop is also held to provide additional training opportunities for members. Both of these events provide excellent networking opportunities for municipal elected officials to share information and ideas.

## UNSM Priority Areas

- Building Provincial-Municipal Relationship
- Municipal Viability
- New Infrastructure Programs
- Property Taxation and Capped Assessment Program (CAP)
- Economic Development
- Environmental Sustainability

## UNSM ADVOCACY DAYS 2014

### Key Messages

#### 1. Municipalities are accountable to the same citizens

- Municipal and provincial orders of government are elected by and serve the same citizens.
- Municipalities are a true order of government that provides critical services to its citizens including water and wastewater, policing, fire protection and recreation. Our services need to be coordinated and complimentary to be most effective and efficient.
- While we understand the province needs to balance its budget, it cannot do it on the backs of municipal taxpayers.
- The financial pressures facing municipalities, largely due to increased provincial and federal regulations, cannot be absorbed by our residents - we need to work together to find solutions.

#### 2. Municipalities and the Province need to collaborate

- Municipalities want to work with the Province on a variety of overlapping interests including municipal viability and structural change, economic development, environmental sustainability, climate change; policing, and infrastructure.
- Where our interests overlap, we need to work together to avoid duplication and confusion.

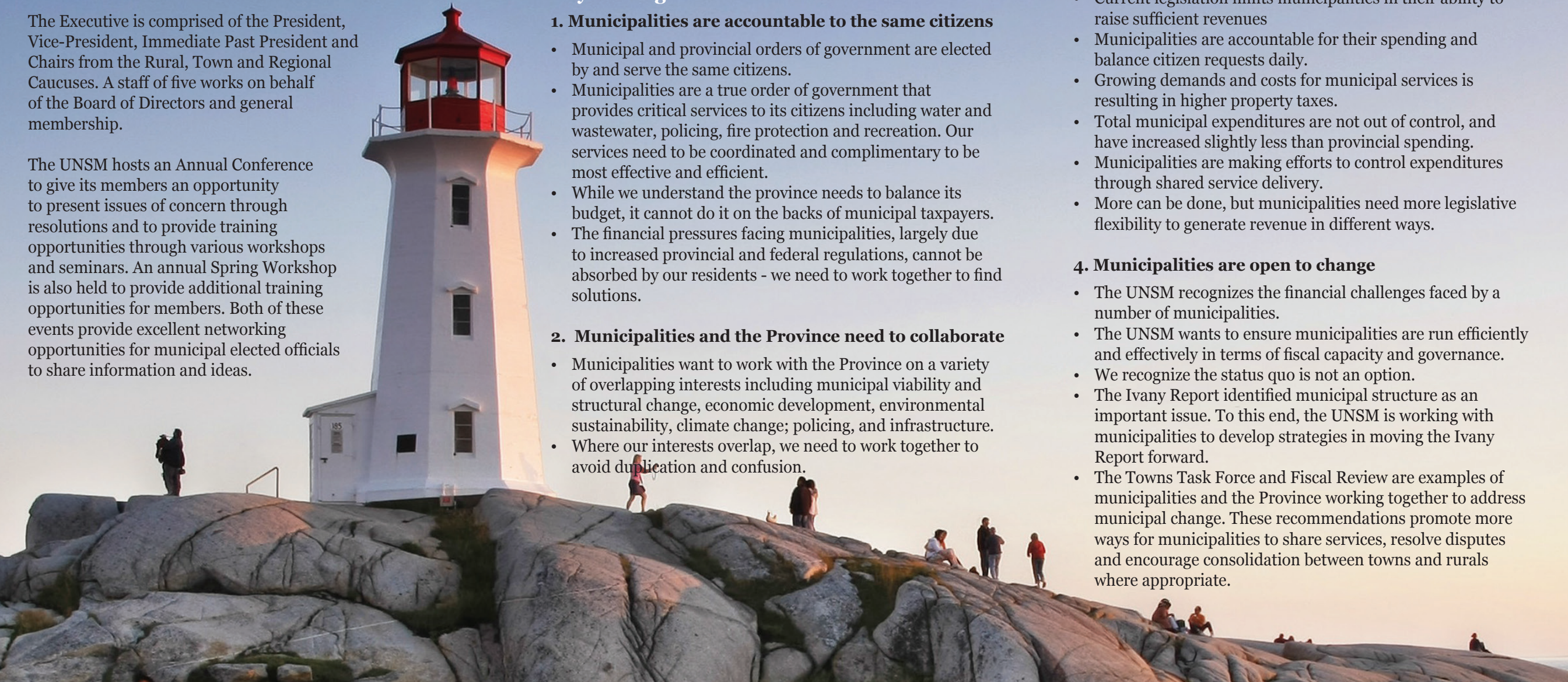
- When we work together, results are better.
- Given the costs to comply with federal and provincial water and wastewater regulations and the current state of municipal infrastructure, it is paramount that municipalities receive significant funding from the Building Canada Fund and that a comprehensive asset management plan be developed.
- We need to discuss our respective roles and priorities, and the most appropriate methods to pay for services.

#### 3. Municipalities require more ways to generate revenue

- Current legislation limits municipalities in their ability to raise sufficient revenues
- Municipalities are accountable for their spending and balance citizen requests daily.
- Growing demands and costs for municipal services is resulting in higher property taxes.
- Total municipal expenditures are not out of control, and have increased slightly less than provincial spending.
- Municipalities are making efforts to control expenditures through shared service delivery.
- More can be done, but municipalities need more legislative flexibility to generate revenue in different ways.

#### 4. Municipalities are open to change

- The UNSM recognizes the financial challenges faced by a number of municipalities.
- The UNSM wants to ensure municipalities are run efficiently and effectively in terms of fiscal capacity and governance.
- We recognize the status quo is not an option.
- The Ivany Report identified municipal structure as an important issue. To this end, the UNSM is working with municipalities to develop strategies in moving the Ivany Report forward.
- The Towns Task Force and Fiscal Review are examples of municipalities and the Province working together to address municipal change. These recommendations promote more ways for municipalities to share services, resolve disputes and encourage consolidation between towns and rurals where appropriate.





## UNSM Board of Directors

- Mayor David Corkum,  
Town of Kentville, President
- Warden Keith Hunter,  
County of Cumberland, Vice-President/Secretary-Treasurer
- Councillor Russell Walker,  
Halifax Regional Municipality, Immediate Past-President
- Councillor Claire Detheridge,  
Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Regional Caucus Chair
- Mayor Bob Taylor,  
County of Colchester, Rural Caucus Chair
- Mayor Carl Chisholm,  
Town of Antigonish, Towns Caucus Chair
- Councillor Bill Karsten,  
Halifax Regional Municipality, Regional Caucus
- Councillor Clarence Prince,  
Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Regional Caucus
- Mayor Don Downe,  
District of Lunenburg, Rural Caucus
- Warden Bruce Morrison,  
County of Victoria, Rural Caucus
- Councillor Greg MacArthur,  
Town of Truro, Towns Caucus
- Councillor Laurie Murley,  
Town of Windsor, Towns Caucus
- CAO Rennie Bugley,  
County of Cumberland, AMA Representative

## UNSM Staff

- Betty MacDonald, Executive Director
- Lyle Goldberg, Policy Analyst
- Debbie Nielsen, Municipal Sustainability Coordinator
- Judy Webber, Event Planner/Financial Officer
- Tracy Verbeke, Secretary/Receptionist

## Further Information

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## 2014 Advocacy Days

April 28 – May 2, 2014

Building the Provincial-Municipal Relationship

