

## **Resolution 24A**

### **GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION WITH UNSM (PASSED)**

⇒ Town of Mahone Bay

**WHEREAS** on March 22, 2011, the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations informed municipalities that effective for the 2012/13 fiscal year the province will no longer honor the 2007 agreement with the UNSM on the cost responsibility for various services and the province will stop taking on any additional costs for public housing, corrections and education ; and

**WHEREAS** this decision was made by the government without consultation or negotiation with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities; and

**WHEREAS** the UNSM and previous Provincial governments have developed a consultation process that worked well for both the Province and the municipalities; and

**WHEREAS** the effect of the announcement by the Minister will result in additional costs to all municipalities without the benefit of discussion;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the UNSM write to Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations indicating that any further changes to policies and programs affecting municipalities should only occur after negotiating in good faith with the municipalities through the UNSM.

Forwarded to:  
*Minister of Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations*

### **RESPONSE:**

*I am writing in response to your recent letter concerning resolutions passed at the recent Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities Conference.*

*Government strives to consult with the UNSM on issues. This is done through a number of mechanisms including the Provincial Municipal Round Table, Ministers Panel at the UNSM Conference, meetings between the Department and the UNSM and through working together on various tasks and reviews such as the Towns Task Force, Municipal Auditor General Committee, and Fiscal Review.*

*With specific reference to the MOU, the Province gave municipalities one year's notice of the changes to the MOU. In addition, the Province was very clear in the time period proceeding this notice that all third party organizations and agencies should be prepared to shoulder some of the burden of getting the Province Back to Balance.*

*Although decisions such as amending the MOU are difficult, they are also necessary in order to ensure a sustainable future for all Nova Scotians.*

*By giving a year's notice of the changes, municipalities have the time to prepare for the changes and to budget accordingly. It should also be noted that municipal governments in Nova Scotia did and will continue to receive substantial financial benefit from the MOU.*

*The Honourable John MacDonell  
Minister  
January 4, 2012*