

ROMA CONFERENCE REPORT

Jan 27-29, 2019

Cathy Dwyer

1. Participation in education sessions:

The Conference is a premiere education opportunity for rural and northern municipal governments. With over 20 distinct conference sessions, they provided an opportunity to learn about new trends, best practices and emerging issues important to smaller Ontario municipalities.

I participated in the following sessions;

1. Bill 68: Changes to the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act and the Municipal Act and Why they Matter to You (I recorded this presentation if anyone wants to listen)
2. The Bell weather Effect: Stop Following! Start Inspiring!
3. Update on Cannabis Legalization and the Licensing Framework
4. Here Comes 5G
5. Shifting into a Higher Gear: Processes to Streamline Planning and Development
6. Labour Law and Municipal Government Employers
7. Municipal Role in Duty to Consult

2. Interaction with Ministers and other government officials:

Sunday morning we met with Jim McDonell, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and, Lynn Buckham, Regional Director, Northern Ontario (Lynn and her husband, Andy Stevens have a cottage on the NE Arm of Lk Temagami).

<C:\Users\cathy.dwyer\Documents\ROMA 2019 Municipal Affairs.docx> This is the document we worked from.

Tuesday morning we met with Rod Phillips, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and his staff regarding the Temagami North lagoons.

<C:\Users\cathy.dwyer\Documents\ROMA 2019 Environment.docx> This is the document we worked from.

With both meetings we did not get a commitment, nor did we ask for one, we merely highlighted the issues requested that they look into it for us or expect the Municipality to be contacting them regarding each issue.

On Monday January 28, 2019 The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario gave a speech about how they are listening to rural and northern Ontario municipalities and the level of red tape impacting municipalities and business (380,000 regulations), plus eliminating duplication between levels of government (Fed & Prov). He mentioned reducing fuel prices by 5 cents, scrap the cap and trade carbon trade, double hatters for

firefighters, acted on natural gas-78 communities, working to help municipalities; 58 have been designated to receive help with infrastructure planning (we are one of them), he talked about help to medium size hospitals to end hallway health care. He also mentioned many times about the level of consultation that they are doing. He mentioned scraping the green energy act which got applause, Bill 66 and eliminating Sch 10 to protect the Greenbelt in Ont. Joint and Several Liability; the liability chill that stopped tobogganing, street hockey, increasing insurance costs, and that the Government is taking the next 6 months to do a comprehensive review of each ministry.

We also heard from The Honourable Ernie Hardeman, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and The Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. <https://municipalinfonet.com/article/municipal/category/Economy/63/745751/B-Ontario-Working-to-Support-Rural-Communities.html>

Then there was the Ministers Forum with most of the Ministers present and the audience was able to ask many questions that were wide ranging.

3. Networking:

I met many people from all over the province. I had breakfast with a good friend of Dan's Sue? who has been on Council for 4 terms. She told me the story of their grocery store burning down and how the Municipality built a new store and lease it out to Freshmart, she talked about purchasing land from a private developer along the river and that they are going to be building a marina, how the attracted 24 new families to town and how important the CIP was.

I talked with Temiskaming Shores Mayor about the Forest Management Plan, he presented the resolution from Temiskaming Municipal Assoc. to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry regarding support for the project.

And many more people.

There was a good trade show so I picked up material of interest, including the Economic Developers Council of Ontario. www.edco.on.ca

Overall, I came away with sense that just because we are small or remote, we have the ear of the government through ROMA and AMO who are doing a lot to advance our positions with government. Additionally, they are there to help us and work through problems and issues.