



# COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL

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**DATE:** February 19, 2020

**TO:** MAYOR AND COUNCIL

**NAME AND TITLE:** Councillor Brian Skakun, Chair  
Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Resolutions

**SUBJECT:** Update on 2019 Union of BC Municipalities Convention Resolutions and Proposed 2020 Resolution for Consideration

**ATTACHMENT(S):** Schedule "A" – Provincial Response to City of Prince George Resolutions considered at the 2019 UBCM Convention

Schedule "B" - City of Prince George Resolution regarding "Sharing Payments from Opioid Class Action Lawsuit"

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Council:

1. ENDORSES the resolution titled "Sharing Payments from Opioid Class Action Lawsuit" set out in Schedule "B" to the report dated February 19, 2020 titled "Update on 2019 Union of BC Municipalities Convention Resolutions and Proposed 2020 Resolution for Consideration" for submission to the 2020 North Central Local Government Association Annual General Meeting and Convention; and
2. DIRECTS Administration to send the resolution attached as Schedule "B" to all BC local governments with a request for support of the resolution at the 2020 Union of BC Municipalities Convention.

## PURPOSE:

For Council consideration and decision.

## BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION:

The Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Resolutions held meetings in the months of May and June 2019. At their meeting held on June 14, 2019, the Committee recommended two resolutions that were approved and forwarded by Council for consideration at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) September 2019 Convention.

An update on the 2019 recommendations and comments of the UBCM Resolutions Committee is outlined below, along with information on the Standing Committee's proposed resolution for the 2020 UBCM Convention for Council's consideration.

a. Update on 2019 UBCM Convention Resolutions

Resolution One:

*Whereas the provision of police services places a significant financial burden on local government;*

*And whereas the Civil Forfeiture Crime Prevention and Crime Remediation Grant Program funds community crime reduction and crime prevention activities, but does not address local government policing costs, including expenditures related to investigations and police work that result in seizures of proceeds of crime;*

*Therefore, be it resolved that the Province share seizures of proceeds of crime with local governments to help address protective services costs.*

Resolution one was endorsed by the UBCM Resolutions Committee with a note that local governments, First Nations, police agencies and community groups may apply for a portion of these funds through a provincial grant program.

Resolution Two:

*Whereas the low barrier distribution of harm reduction supplies, including syringes and other safe injection supplies, in communities across BC poses a significant safety and cleanliness concern;*

*And whereas local governments, businesses and residents are bearing the escalating cost of cleaning up needles and drug paraphernalia in public spaces;*

*Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM request ongoing provincial funding to local governments to cover the cost of cleaning up needles and drug paraphernalia in their communities.*

With respect to resolution two, the UBCM Resolutions Committee did not have a recommendation. They noted that the proposed resolution seeks to address the clean-up associated with harm reduction strategies previously endorsed by the UBCM. They also referred to their preceding support of resolutions requesting access to medicines for harm reduction.

In the fall of 2019, the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, the Overdose Emergency Response Centre and the Community Action Initiative introduced a “Community Wellness and Harm Reduction Grant” funding program for a one-year period addressing the concerns raised in Resolution two. The Grant Program is intended to support local governments with community wellness and/or harm reduction initiatives focused on a range of support services and strategies designed to assist communities to be safer, healthier and more inclusive. Project examples included funding toward initiatives for the clean-up of discarded needles and other drug paraphernalia.

The City applied for this one-time grant in the amount of \$50,000 to fund the continued operation of the Association Advocating for Women and Community (AWAC) Homeless Service Hub for an additional six month period. The Homeless Service Hub is a harm reduction initiative that was started as a pilot project in partnership with Northern Health Authority. Within a harm reduction framework, this project provides access to essential health sector interventions.

At the March 11, 2019 regular meeting, Council approved two additional resolutions to be submitted to the North Central Local Government Association (NCLGA) for debate at the Annual General Meeting and Convention. These resolutions were endorsed by the NCLGA Resolutions Committee and submitted for consideration at the UBCM Convention.

### Resolution 3:

*Whereas the population of the Southern Mountain Caribou herds in British Columbia has been declining;*

*And whereas the provincial and federal governments are reviewing whether the Southern Mountain Caribou should be protected by the Species at Risk Act;*

*And whereas application of the Act will directly affect both the recreational pursuits of local residents as well as the regional tourism and natural resource sectors;*

*And whereas municipal and regional district governments have not been given the opportunity to participate in public consultation discussions to date about the Southern Mountain Caribou and the potential implications of the application of the Species at Risk Act despite the significant impacts on local recreation, tourism, and resource sectors;*

*Therefore, be it resolved that NCLGA advocate for the participation of municipal and regional district governments that are likely to be affected and that the provincial and federal governments begin a process of public consultation in regards to the potential application of the Species at Risk Act pertaining to the Southern Mountain Caribou and Boreal Caribou.*

This resolution was endorsed by the UBCM Resolutions Committee. They commented on their past support of resolutions that called for the Province to consult with local governments on impacts of implementation plans for the conservation and regeneration of woodland caribou in BC.

On March 27, 2019, the Province announced four community consultations in the Peace Region of BC, and advised that additional consultations would follow.

### Resolution 4:

*Whereas nearly 40% of rural residents in North-Central BC do not have access to broadband internet services;*

*And whereas broadband service would enhance public safety, economic development, access to information, and social inclusion for rural residents and allow them to fully participate in the knowledge-based economy and society at a level enjoyed by other Canadians;*

*And whereas the Government of Canada has recognized the disparity and established a Ministry of Rural Economic Development that includes rural broadband as a top priority;*

*Now therefore, be it resolved that NCLGA support the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in its advocacy work for a specific timetable regarding the implementation of broadband service in rural Canada, and in particular, the rural parts of North-Central British Columbia.*

The UBCM Resolutions Committee endorsed resolution 4 and noted that the UBCM membership has endorsed resolutions in years past, calling on the provincial and federal governments to ensure the availability of high speed internet and cellular telephone coverage to all communities. The UBCM Resolutions Committee recommended that the enactment clause be amended to remove the specific reference to “rural parts of North-Central British Columbia” recognizing that there are many rural areas of BC that are not within North Central BC.

On February 19, 2020, the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs released provincial responses to resolutions considered at the 2019 UBCM Convention. Attached as Schedule “A” are the responses to each of the resolutions put forward by the City.

b. Proposed 2020 Resolution for Consideration

This year, the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Resolutions held meetings on January 9<sup>th</sup>, February 3<sup>rd</sup> and February 18<sup>th</sup>. At their last meeting, the Committee considered the attached resolution regarding “Sharing Payments from Opioid Class Action Lawsuit”, attached as Schedule “B” and recommends that it be submitted for debate at the 2020 NCLGA Convention.

The proposed resolution highlights an important issue that local governments face considerable financial burdens in working to address root causes of the drug and opioid crisis through various programs and services, reducing harm and supporting people struggling with mental health and addiction. The Province sharing proceeds of any damages recovered under the *Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act* with local governments would assist considerably with the funding of City programs and services.

For resolutions this year, the NCLGA Convention is scheduled for May 13 to 15, 2020 in Prince George. The Association has requested resolutions be submitted before Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>. UBCM encourages all members to submit resolutions first to Area Associations for consideration. Resolutions endorsed by Area Associations at their annual meetings are submitted automatically to UBCM for consideration.

The next UBCM Convention is scheduled for September 21 to 25, 2020 in Victoria. The deadline for submitting resolutions is June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:**

The report summarizes the responses from the UBCM Resolutions Committee and Province regarding their consideration of the resolutions put forward by the City in 2019 and recommends the attached resolution regarding “Sharing Payments from Opioid Class Action Lawsuit” be advanced to the NCLGA 2020 Convention for consideration.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:**

Councillor Brian Skakun, Chair  
Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Resolutions

Meeting Date: [2020-03-09]