

From: ptaylor@ubcm.ca [<mailto:ptaylor@ubcm.ca>]
Sent: December 4, 2009 4:56 PM
Subject: Elections Task Force - News Release and Holding Lines

TO: Mayor and Council
Chair and Regional District Board
FROM: UBCM Secretariat
DATE: December 4, 2009
RE: Elections Task Force Underway

Earlier today UBCM and the Province of British Columbia distributed a news release to provide notice with regard to the work of the Elections Task Force. The news release is included with this distribution.

The Premier invited UBCM to participate in the task force at the 2009 Convention. At our board meeting last week, the Executive appointed First VP Councillor Barbara Steele (Surrey) and Third VP Mayor Mary Sjostrom (Quesnel) to join President Harry Nyce to represent UBCM for the duration of the consultation.

As local government leaders, you may receive questions from local media with regard to the work of the task force. To assist your responses to local media questions, we are providing some holding lines to clarify the task force's status and purpose:

The aim of the task force is to improve the fairness, accountability and transparency of the elections process at the local government level.

The task force recognizes that there are legislated guidelines already in place for local government elections. A lot of positive changes have been made in recent years to the Local Government Act to modernize elections, and the team will look at any remaining gaps in the process.

The task force will examine specific issues related to Local government elections topics such as campaign financing, enforcement, the role of B.C.'s chief electoral officer, the election cycle, the corporate vote, candidate eligibility and other matters as agreed to by the Task Force.

Local government elections impact all British Columbians, and the task force will actively seek input from a variety of stakeholders, including local governments, representative groups and the public.

January 14, 2010



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2009CD0051-000725
December 4, 2009

Ministry of Community and Rural Development
Union of British Columbia Municipalities

ELECTIONS TASK FORCE GETS UNDERWAY

VICTORIA – A task force dedicated to reviewing and making recommendations for B.C.’s local government electoral process has held its first meeting. Co-chairs Bill Bennett, Minister of Community and Rural Development, and Harry Nyce, president of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), announced the composition of the Local Government Elections Task Force and the scope of its work.

“The aim of the task force is to improve the fairness, accountability and transparency of the elections process at the local government level,” said Bennett. “We’re looking forward to working with UBCM to ensure legislative changes work for local governments and all British Columbians.”

“The elections task force will provide a forum to review and improve the legislation directing local government elections,” said Nyce. “In recent years, B.C. local governments have proposed a number of resolutions to amend the legislation, and we appreciate the Premier’s invitation to further explore specific issues related to elections.”

On Oct. 2, Premier Gordon Campbell announced that a special joint task force co-chaired by Bennett and Nyce would be making recommendations for changes to local government elections legislation. Two other UBCM designates and two government MLAs were confirmed at meetings on Nov. 27:

- Surrey Councillor Barbara Steele, first vice-president, UBCM.
- Quesnel Mayor Mary Sjostrom, third vice-president, UBCM.
- Donna Barnett, Cariboo-Chilcotin MLA.
- Douglas Horne, Coquitlam-Burke Mountain MLA.

The task force, which met Dec. 3, will review specific issues related to various local government elections topics, including campaign financing, enforcement, the role of B.C.’s chief electoral officer, the election cycle, the corporate vote, candidate eligibility and other items to be mutually agreed upon.

The task force recognizes the importance of seeking feedback from a diverse range of stakeholders and will invite input from local governments, representative groups and the public on topics under review.

January 14, 2010

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The recommendations of the task force are to be presented to the Province no later than May 30, 2010, in time for approved legislative changes to be implemented for the 2011 local government elections.

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MEMBER NOTICE

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