

Northern Association of Community Councils Inc.

32nd Annual General Assembly

November 21-23, 2002

The 32nd Annual General Assembly of the Northern Association of Community Councils (NACC) will take place at Winnipeg's Victoria Inn November 21 to 23, 2002.

The assembly's theme will be

Community Pride and Commitment—Keys to Success.

A presidential election will be held as a feature of the assembly this year.

A focus of this year's assembly will be the new funding formula implemented by Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs. NACC will also be offering a presentation on what NACC means to northern communities.

A meet and greet is planned for the evening of November 20 and a mayor and councillor forum with Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs will take place on November 21. November 22 will feature administrator/clerk training. A live band will entertain during the social evening.

Registration forms will be delivered shortly.

If you have questions about the conference please call 1-888-947-6222.

Hope to see you all there,

Shawna Budd, Community Resource Liaison
Northern Association of Community Councils Inc.

Contact

Ray Irvine
1680 Ellice Avenue, Bay 8
Winnipeg, MB R3H 0Z2
Ph: 204-945-5968
Fax: 204-948-2389
Email: R.Irvine@gov.mb.ca
www.gov.mb.ca/ana

Community Council members, community residents and departmental staff are strongly encouraged to submit feedback (comments and questions), suggestions and ideas to the editor.

COMMUNITY CONTACT

For and About
Local Government
Development

Manitoba
Aboriginal and
Northern Affairs



October 2002

Volume 2, Issue 8

Government in
Canada /2

Community Councils
Roles and
Responsibilities /3

Process of a
Community
Election /4-5

Elections Officers
Roles and
Responsibilities /6

Municipal
Developments
Consultants Roles and
Responsibilities /7

Northern Association
of Community Councils
Inc. 23rd AGA /8

Getting Ready For Elections

Community elections are coming up in February and it is a good idea to start preparing early. Do you have election officers to appoint? Has training been arranged for new officers? Are you going to need election materials? An early start to preparations will help avoid last minute rushes by ensuring that everyone is ready. It will also help assure that the election process runs smoothly according to the Northern Manitoba Elections Regulation.

Now may also be a good time to dust off the Election Officers Handbook published by Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs. It is an excellent resource for election officers, administrators, clerks, elected officials or anyone else interested in the election process. If you do not have a copy available in your council office, please contact the municipal development consultant at your regional office of Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs.

For those thinking about running for office, be sure to read "Running

for Office". This handbook for candidates, published as part of our Community Management Series, is available either through your council office or regional office of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs.



Government in Canada

An Overview of the Federal, Provincial and Local Governments of Canada

On July 1, 1867, the self-governing Dominion of Canada was formed under *The British North America Act*. Canada's form of government is called a constitutional monarchy. This form of government is made up of the monarch (currently Queen Elizabeth II, who is represented in Canada by the Governor General) who is the head of state, and Parliament, which is the elected government.

The Canadian Parliament consists of the Senate and the House of Commons. The House is the major lawmaking body of government. It consists of Members of Parliament (MPs) elected in constituencies, or ridings, across Canada. MPs usually belong to one of the five established political parties or act as independents. There are currently 301 seats in Parliament and the party with the largest number of seats forms the government. Governments may be majority governments, in which the governing party occupies more than half of the seats in Parliament, or minority governments, in which the governing party occupies less than half of the seats in Parliament.

The leader of the ruling party is the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister selects his or her Cabinet, or Ministers, from elected MPs of the governing party. Each Minister is responsible for one or more portfolios, which are the departments and duties they oversee. Ministers also perform

their duties through commissions, special boards, committees and state-owned corporations.

Similar parliamentary principles apply to provincial governments. In Manitoba, the Legislature is made up of Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), and the leader of the ruling party is the Premier.

As a federal state, Canada consists of three main levels of government—federal, provincial, and municipal. The federal government is the central governing body. Provincial governments are bodies elected to govern provinces and municipal governments are elected to govern at the community level.

The power to pass laws in Canada is divided between the federal and provincial governments. While most areas of responsibility are clearly divided between these two levels, at times, some responsibilities are subject to dispute between federal and provincial governments.

In 1982, the Canadian Constitution was repatriated and renamed *The Constitution Act*. This means that the Canadian Constitution was brought completely under the control of the Canadian government, as opposed to the British government. This repatriation also included the establishment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which articulates a number of basic rights and freedoms under *The Constitution Act*.



Municipal Development *Consultants*

Roles and Responsibilities

A major goal of Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs is to help build independence and increase local control in communities. Municipal Development Consultants (MDCs) support this goal by helping community councils with organizational development and governance issues in their communities.

In consideration of different community needs, MDCs are expected to provide guidance and assistance on a wide range of topics. They work with community councils in areas such as municipal administration and financial management, planning, budgeting and human resources. They may be called upon to advise on the development of policies and procedures, the drafting of by-laws,

accounting practices or reporting requirements. In fulfilling their consulting role MDCs prepare, present or facilitate seminars, workshops and training sessions for elected officials and staff as required.

MDCs also support communities by facilitating communication between government departments, resource providers and community councils. They assist communities find resources appropriate to community needs.

As facilitators and consultants, MDCs are here to support elected representatives and council staff in their efforts to deliver municipal services and effective local government.

MANITOBA COMMITTEE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION 2nd Provincial Suicide Prevention Forum

This working forum will be held on
November 7th & 8th,
at the Delta Winnipeg, ending Friday at 12:30 P.M.

The forum will be preceded by a two-day training session with Jeannette Ambrose on treating suicidal adolescents in a family context. Information for this workshop can be found at: www.klinik.mb.ca

The forum agenda will include:

- Models for building effective and inclusive partnerships within communities, with a half-day focus on building effective partnerships with Aboriginal peoples and organizations
- A showcase of community, regional and Aboriginal initiatives
- A review of the provincial suicide prevention strategic plan and identification of priorities for 2003
- Public awareness initiatives
- A report on best practices in suicide prevention and research commissioned by the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

Registration for the forum is \$40.00. Lunch will be provided on the Thursday. Registration will be open at 8:00 a.m. and the Forum will run from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday and 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Friday. Please register through the special events organizer, Donna Reid at **Manitoba Committee For Suicide Prevention c/o 870 Portage Ave., Wpg. Mb, R3G 0P1** by fax 772-7998 or e-mail forum@klinik.mb.ca.

If you have any questions you can contact Donna Reid at 784-4073

Elections Officers

Roles and Responsibilities

At election time, elections officers fulfill a variety of roles to ensure that elections are carried out properly and efficiently. While elections officers are often community members, they carry out their duties in a non-partisan manner to make sure the democratic process is followed. There are four key election officers during an election: returning officer, revising officer, poll clerk and enumerator.

Returning Officer

The returning officer has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the community election process is carried out according to regulations. The returning officer serves as a supervisor over all other election officers, ensures the election is conducted properly, and is responsible to both the council and the principal electoral officer (PEO). The returning officer can call upon the PEO for direction in interpreting and applying regulations, and can request additional support from Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs staff.

Revising Officer

The revising officer oversees changes to the list of voters. For this purpose, the revising officer holds a sitting for revisions during which names can be added to the list of electors and any

spelling errors can be corrected. In special cases, names can also be removed from the list. The revising officer must hold a sitting for revisions before every council election or byelection. The revising officer may also serve as the poll clerk and is responsible to the returning officer.

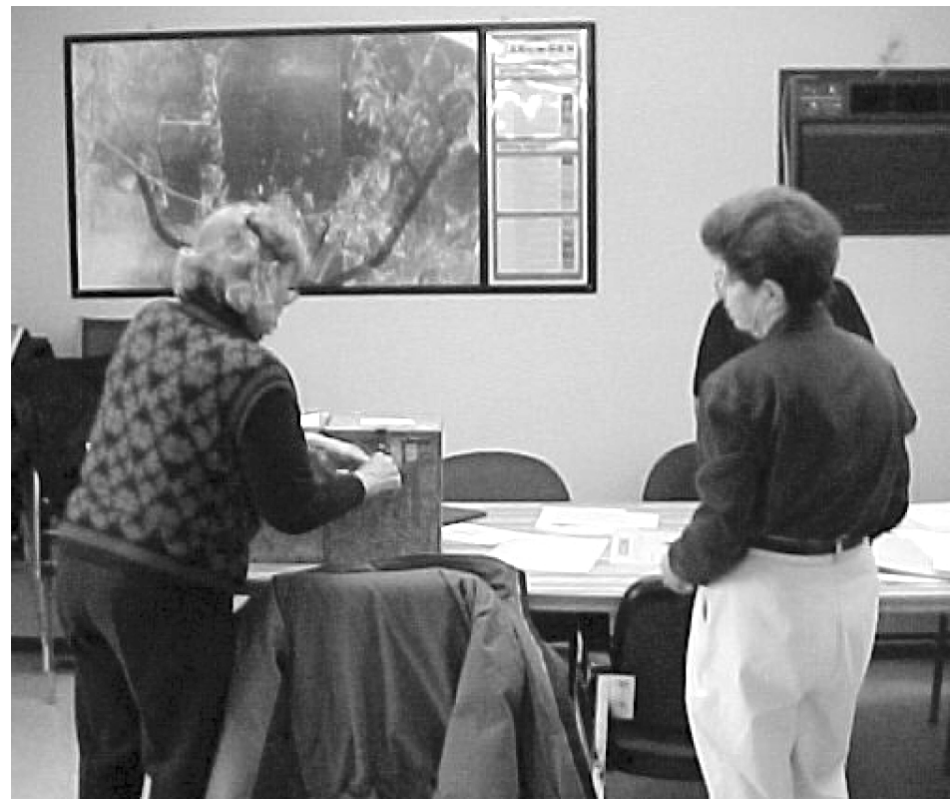
Poll Clerk

Appointed by the returning officer, the poll clerk assists the returning officer in duties at the poll. A poll clerk may also work as an interpreter but must swear an oath before assuming the responsibility.

Enumerator

The enumerator is responsible to the returning officer. Before every community council election and byelection, the enumerator is required to prepare a list of voters. This list must be an accurate list of all people qualified to vote.

If you would like more information on the roles and responsibilities of elections officers, please refer to the Elections Officers Handbook published by Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, a copy of which should be available at your community council office.



Community Councils

Roles and Responsibilities

In Canada, *The Constitution Act* assigns responsibility for municipal government to the provinces. In turn, the provinces grant municipal authority and decision-making powers to the governments closest to the people—local governments. Under *The Northern Affairs Act*, community councils, normally consisting of elected councillors and a mayor, serve as the local governments in Northern Affairs communities.

Northern Affairs community councils are responsible for providing services to the community. They work closely with Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs staff and outside organizations to deliver capital projects like community halls and roads. They also provide water and wastewater services, road clearing, land-use planning and maintenance for community infrastructure and assets.



It is a goal of Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs to help communities become legal, independent entities by incorporating. Under *The Northern Affairs Act*, Incorporated communities have powers to pass by-laws, levy taxes, acquire and develop property, and enter into agreements with other communities and organizations.

The roles and responsibilities of local government may vary from community to community but the overall responsibility of council is to strive toward good government through leadership, appropriate programs and services that ensure the people of the community will be healthy and safe. Community councillors are responsible for developing and evaluating policies and programs, participating in community and council meetings and directing management of the community.

New Technical and Public Works Consultant for The Pas Sub-Office

Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs is pleased to welcome Albert Sandberg, our new technical and public works consultant for The Pas sub-office. Most recently employed with Agriculture and Agri-food Canada in Brandon, Manitoba, Sandberg is a municipal engineering technologist. He brings with him four years of experience in municipal technology and 15 years of experience in construction and public service in The Pas.

Sandberg's qualifications and northern experience fit well with community needs. Contact him directly at 204-627-8175.

Process of a Community Election

Running for a council position in a community election is an excellent way to get involved with your community and make a difference. To qualify to stand for council office, you must be:

- a Canadian citizen
- at least 18 years of age on the day of the election
- an elector of the community
- not be subject to any disqualification as outlined under *The Northern Affairs Act* or any other act.

A list of those not qualified for nomination as candidates for council includes constables, clerks or other paid employees or officials of the council, and members of other community, municipality or band councils. A complete disqualification list is specified by *The Northern Affairs Act*.



Elections are run in accordance to *The Northern Affairs Act*, Northern Manitoba Elections, Regulation 43/93. During the election period, a copy of this regulation is posted in the office of the returning officer and in the council office. Regular elections are held every third year, and the next one will occur in February, 2003.

Enumeration

Each regular election starts with enumeration, in which a list of electors is prepared. This may also be required prior to a byelection. The list of electors contains an accurate list of all people who are qualified to vote in a community election. People wanting to make revisions to this list may do so at the Sitting for Revision as advertised by the returning officer. The revised voters list is used at the election poll to verify who can vote.

Nominations

A nomination notice will be posted in your community five days prior to nomination day outlining the date, time and place to pick up the nomination papers. Anyone pursuing nomination must file these papers with the returning officer on the nomination day. It is important to note that the returning officer cannot receive nomination papers from persons who are not qualified. After filing nomination papers, a candidate may begin a campaign to promote his or her candidacy. Any campaign activities, such as putting up posters, handing out brochures and participating in town hall debates must be done according to regulations and guidelines.

Two days following nomination day is the declaration of a poll. If the number of candidates is equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, candidates would be declared elected by acclamation. If there are fewer candidates than number of vacancies, nomination would be re-opened to allow more people to become candidates. Where there are more candidates than vacancies, a poll is declared. The names of

candidates are publicly announced at the community council office along with the dates and times when polls will be open for casting ballots.

Any candidate who wishes to withdraw their nomination has until 2:00 p.m. on the second day following the close of nominations.

Election Day (Polling Day)

Election day for a regular election is always held on the second Wednesday in February and at the places and times stated in the notice. Residents eligible to vote are identified on the voters list and cast their ballots in the polling booth. Election officers will be present to assist voters, to check that each person who votes is named in the List of Electors and to initial the back of the ballot provided to the voter. Any person whose name does not appear on the List of Electors must fill out an Affidavit of Elector prior to casting a ballot.

If you are aware that you will be unable to vote on the polling day you must make arrangements with the returning officer to vote at the advance poll or by mail-in ballot.

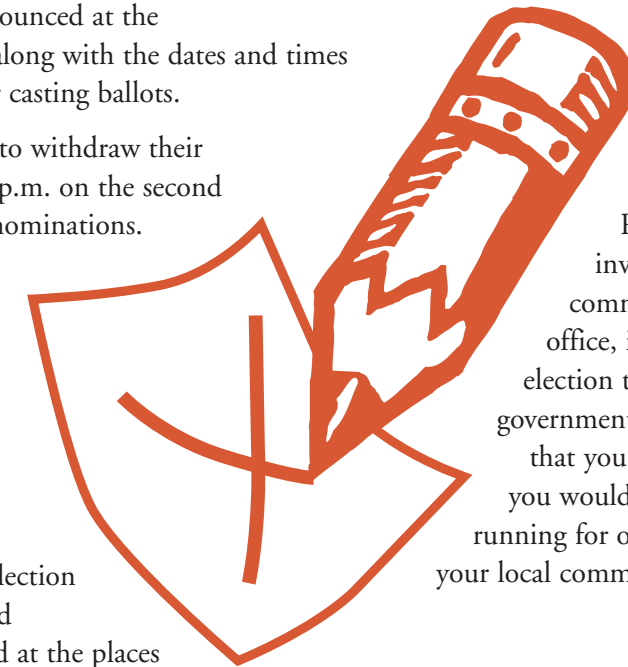
A mail-in ballot is for electors who are unable to come to an advance poll or regular poll because of physical handicap, confinement in a hospital or some similar reason allowed in the regulation.

The purpose of an advanced poll is to give voters who cannot vote in person on election day an opportunity to vote. Advance polls are held between 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., four to seven days before the regular poll.

At noon on the day after the election, the results of the election are publicly announced at the office of the community council. The returning officer will announce results in the order of the most to least votes received. Two weeks after the election, the candidates are sworn into

office marking the first day of their term of office. The new mayor or councillor's term of office expires 14 days after the next regular election that completes the term.

Running for office is a great way to get involved in the daily operation of your community. Even if you're not running for office, it's important that you turn out to vote at election time. Your vote represents your say in the government of your community and it's important that you and your fellow citizens get involved. If you would like more information on elections or running for office in your community, please contact your local community council office.



BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE



Aboriginal Youth Career Fair
Winnipeg Convention Centre

Wednesday
November 6, 2002
9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

For more information, please contact
Valerie Birdgeneau
Assistant Director of BFF at:
National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation
Suite 33A, 70 Yorkville Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M5R 1B9
Tel: 416-926-0775
or toll-free 1-800-329-9780
Fax: 416-926-7554
Email: vbirdgeneau@naaf.ca
or visit our website at www.naaf.ca