

2021 Resolutions



Category A

1-2021

Municipal Electoral Reform

Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador Board of Directors

Whereas the outcomes of the ongoing legislative reviews of the Municipalities Act and the City Acts for each of St. John's, Mount Pearl and Corner Brook will require harmonization throughout multiple, other items of enabling legislation applicable to the municipal sector, including the Municipal Elections Act;

Whereas elections for all three levels of government in Newfoundland and Labrador have taken place in 2021 under pandemic conditions, necessitating adjustments to conventional practices and revealing significant legislative shortcomings in the Election Acts for each level of government;

Whereas a review of the provincial Elections Act for Newfoundland and Labrador is planned;

Whereas the current Vote by Mail provisions of the Municipal Elections Act present undue barriers to its implementation by small towns;

Whereas to recognize the contributions of all residents to their respective community, consideration must be given to no longer limiting the opportunity to vote municipally to Canadian citizens, 18 years of age and older; and,

Whereas MNL's Resolution 5-2017 from the Town of Brigus has previously called for a review of the Act, especially with respect to residency requirements, and the 2018 report of the Citizens' Assembly for Stronger Elections (CASE) identified that and other issues, including the currently prescribed municipal election date;

Therefore be it resolved that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador request that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador work closely with MNL to undertake a legislative review of the Municipal Elections Act.

Staff Comments: This resolution supports MNL staff activity in the lead up to the municipal elections and the identified need for municipal electoral reform as it relates specifically to vote by mail. It also addresses recommendations brought forward by CASE NL to the City of St. John's outlining several key deficiencies and barriers to voter participation, as well as the provincial interests in attracting, welcoming, and retaining newcomers.

2-2021

Code of Conduct

Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador Board of Directors

Whereas clear, consistent and fair policy and implementation respecting such matters as conflict of interest, harassment, discrimination and ethical conduct in keeping with the public trust should exist across all municipal governments in Newfoundland and Labrador;

Whereas mandatory training is required to ensure that these standards of practice are maintained throughout the municipal sector;

Whereas this should be an enforceable, legislated requirement, properly resourced and supported by the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs; and,

Whereas the 2018 Municipal Legislation Review consultations conducted by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador have demonstrated both the extent of the need and broad support in the sector for a mandatory Code of Conduct applicable to municipal council members and staff;

Therefore be it resolved that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador continue to work with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to bring into effect a standard Municipal Code of Ethical Conduct.

Staff Comments: Information from the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs indicates that new Code of Conduct legislation is forthcoming. Ethical conduct and good governance are important now more than ever. Instances of poor conduct do not reflect well on sector.

3-2021

Implementing Photo Radar Ticketing

City of Mount Pearl

Therefore Be It Resolved that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador lobby the provincial government to develop provincial guidelines for the use of automated speed enforcement (AES) systems, commonly referred to as photo radar, establishing clear direction related to radar site selection, operational restrictions, data collection, and enhanced traffic safety, in an effort to address speeding in municipalities.

Staff Comments: The Town of Paradise put forward a similar resolution in 2015. The province amended the Highway Traffic Act in 2019 to include Image capturing enforcement system, as per section 177.1. https://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/h03.htm#177_1. The municipality is requesting further clarification on guidelines related to these amendments and supports from the provincial government to implement AES systems.

4-2021 **Childcare supports for Councillors** Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador Board of Directors

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of childcare for families;

Whereas accessible and affordable childcare is a national conversation;

Whereas the province of Newfoundland and Labrador has prioritized increased childcare affordability and availability for families and workers; and,

Whereas the lack of access to childcare and funding to support childcare for councillors across the municipal sector is not uniform and has been identified as a barrier to participation by women in particular;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador work with the provincial government to find sector-wide solutions for childcare for elected officials while they engage in official council business.

Staff Comments: This resolution is in response to ongoing conversations in the sector, and from the Women's Caucus in particular. The Make Your Mark Campaign highlighted that municipal leaders participate in council activities with their children. However, formalized and sector wide childcare options for women and parents of young families do not currently exist.

Category B

5-2021 **Paramedics and Rural Ambulance Services** Town of Cape Broyle

Whereas many rural areas are currently without paramedic services at local ambulance stations, in addition to doctor shortages at rural health clinics and lack of on-call medical personnel; and,

Whereas rural areas are in need of emergency services that can save lives in addition to existing primary care system services;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador lobby the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to mandate that all rural ambulance stations have at least one paramedic on duty at all times.

Staff Comments: Health care shortages are a clear challenge in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Health Accord consultations reflect this. Recent media coverage of this issue indicates that paramedic shortages and the availability of on-duty paramedics is dangerously low across the province. An Act Respecting the Provision of Emergency Health and Paramedicine Services is the current provincial legislation governing the licensing and provision of paramedicine. The question is whether the Minister of Health can mandate operators to have at least one paramedic on duty at all times, and whether that is even possible in a labour market context. Regardless of the answer to the question, this is an important resolution to illustrate the healthcare realities that many communities are facing, and to bring attention to the role of municipalities in responding to and addressing these crises.