



COMMUNITY

Manitoba
Municipal and Northern Relations

CONTACT

Fall 2024 

The Northern Affairs Newsletter



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Expanding Community Programming Through Grant Funding

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INTERVIEW WITH ADM KEVIN MCPIKE

Alero Tenumah sat down with Kevin McPike, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal and Northern Support Services (MNSS), Department of Municipal and Northern Relations (MNR), to reflect on the department's one-year anniversary since merging with Municipal Relations under a new government and to discuss upcoming initiatives for Northern Affairs communities.

This interview has been condensed.

Alero Tenumah (AT): thank you Kevin for joining us for this edition of Community Contact. It is a real pleasure to sit down with you for this conversation.

Kevin McPike (KM): Well, thanks, Alero. I'm glad to see the resumption of the newsletter, and I am happy to have this chat with you. I think it's such a great idea.



By way of introduction, could you briefly tell us a bit about yourself and your career path? What drew you to the department?

KM: All my formal education and training has been geared towards public service and government. I've been with the province of Manitoba for 12 years, beginning as an intern and working up progressively to more challenging roles. Prior to joining the department, I spent a considerable amount of time with the Department of Finance with Treasury Board Secretariat. I also have experience with Apprenticeship Manitoba leading policy and regulatory development for the skilled trades. I was initially drawn to the department by a desire to learn more about Indigenous reconciliation, opportunities for economic development and supporting northern communities.

Could you briefly explain your role as ADM?

KM: I head a large operational division, MNSS, within the Department of MNR. MNSS includes Northern Affairs, the Office of the Fire Commissioner, and the Provincial Assessment Services Branch (PASB), which is responsible for all property assessments outside of the City of Winnipeg. We also have Information Systems, which supports core services in PASB, and finally, Municipal Governance and Advisory Services. There's a lot of overlap between all these areas, and we learn from each other so that we can strengthen the frontline and operational service delivery we provide to communities and municipalities.

My role is to be the link between the legislative building on Broadway and department staff, provide strategic advice, be a steward of our resources and staffing, as well as advocate for programming.

It has been one year since Manitoba installed a new government; can you offer reflections on the changes the Northern Affairs Branch has experienced?

KM: The key change is that Northern Affairs is now within the Department of MNR. Since Northern Affairs communities are similar to municipalities, there are more opportunities for municipalities and communities to share ideas and best practices. We're already seeing incremental changes in the way in which we communicate with communities. We have a renewed emphasis on providing good and timely customer service. We are also exploring how to drive capacity and independence within communities and promote an enhanced quality of life.



Funding pressures remain a major concern for communities. Can you speak to what the department is doing to alleviate these concerns moving forward?

The Department is trying to meet funding needs with a 2% increase to the municipal operating grant and the operating and maintenance funding, but we know that is not enough and is just a start. You'll see more information soon about some of our specific plans over the next number of months, but rest

assured we know funding pressures are a key concern. We have earmarked \$2.4 million for critical fire prevention infrastructure, including fire trucks and other fire mitigation equipment.

As referenced in the recent fire prevention announcement, there is \$1M set aside for smoke detectors and fire prevention equipment with more details to follow. We're also excited about a record \$1M in funding in 2024/25 to maintain local community roads and bridges, and we have the ongoing commitment of \$3.8 million for water, wastewater and solid waste infrastructure projects. Additionally, earlier this year, we released a call-out for proposals to communities for the new Climate Change Preparedness Fund.

Northern Affairs is also reviewing our current funding delivery model to improve and simplify the process that will address key service delivery pressure points and meet the Minister's mandate letter commitment to bring in a predictable multi-year funding model so communities can count on reliable funding for programs, infrastructure and maintenance.

We try to gain insight from communities through their community management plans, and we encourage communities to constantly update and reflect on them, so we have up-to-date information to inform how we allocate resources. When challenges arise, especially when they are unanticipated, pick up the phone and call your regional office so that we can work together to find solutions.

What message would you like to leave with our communities and readers?

KM: I think this is a time of transformation for the Branch. We are taking a closer look and a renewed emphasis on making sure we are responsive to communities' local needs. Through this newsletter, website refresh, engagement surveys and the workshops we offer, we are investing in our local communities and in developing local capacity. We're proud of what we've accomplished so far, and we're excited to keep moving forward on these initiatives and the other commitments we've made. Together as partners, we can meet the needs across our communities and ensure that essential services are safely maintained and functioning effectively for the benefit of all residents.

What is a little-known or surprising fact about yourself that we wouldn't already know?

KM: I am currently, and soon to be, a former member of the Canadian Armed Forces Army Reserve.

What is your favourite quote and why?

KM: "Dull my pride and sharpen my humility" - unknown. It is my guiding mantra that I strive to apply to everything that I do.

AT: We have reached the end of our interview. Thank you, Kevin, for your time, ongoing support and leadership.





COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: WATERHEN

Expanding Community Programming Through Grant Funding

Submitted by Waterhen

“I love Waterhen because it is a close-knit community where everyone is friendly, family-oriented, and show concern for the welfare of their neighbours. Community Council and staff are a pleasure to work with and the whole community strives to keep residents safe, active and happy!

– Louisa McCreery, CAO of Waterhen”

Waterhen is located on the east shore of the Waterhen River midway between Waterhen Lake and Lake Manitoba. The community is home to fishermen, trappers, farmers and many families. The community has a volunteer fire department, water treatment plant, wastewater lagoon, regional waste disposal site, recreational centre, community centre, skating rink. The community also has two parks: Ferry Park which has a dock and a cook shack, East Park which also has an enclosed cook shack, a play structure, washroom, and campsites. Waterhen also runs a monthly newsletter to keep the residents updated on community activities.

Last summer, Waterhen applied for multiple grants and their hard work was rewarded with funding to support a variety of community programming activities including:

Raised Garden Boxes (May 2024):

Waterhen applied for a one-time grant through Northern Manitoba Food, Culture, and Community Collaborative (NMFCCC) to build raised garden boxes. They applied for the materials needed to build the boxes, such as treated wood, plastic, screws, etc. Regardless of prior building experience, the grant was open to all residents in the



community, as long as they attended the building workshop. Waterhen was also able to secure soil and seed from NHFI-NACC Seed Program for residents to fill their garden boxes up. The raised garden beds have been well received by residents this year; the elderly population are especially grateful as it helps avoid the need to bend down to weed.

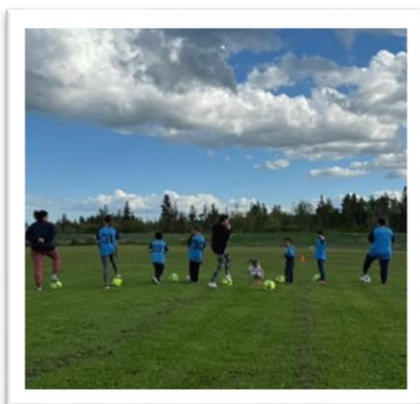
COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: WATERHEN

Expanding Community Programming Through Grant Funding

“We have a council and CAO that care for the well-being of their residents by creating opportunities (with the help of grants) for the children, youth and everyone to come together throughout the year.”
 – Kandel Linklater, Community Resident ”

Waterhen School Program (May & June 2024):

Waterhen applied for the Healthy Together Now Grant through Prairie Mountain Health to start a soccer program to get residents active and healthy. This grant was a one-time start-up grant, which helped secure all the required soccer equipment, the instructor's fee and some



healthy snacks. This program was available for children ages 2-13, games were separated by age groups, with one big session including

everyone at the end. Children and parents loved the soccer program as it got them out and active without having to travel 50 minutes to the next available soccer program.

Canada Day (July 2024):

Waterhen also applied through Canada Heritage to secure funds to host a colourful Canada Day event. Council was able to purchase decorations and promotional materials through the grant. Council also provided a free pancake breakfast along with a Canada Day parade that was open to all. The parade was well attended; some residents walked to the event, while others drove their ATVs and bicycles.

After the parade, the local fire department held their annual Duck Race to raise funds. The race involves interested participants in the community purchasing numbered rubber ducks which are then released into the river by the fire department's zodiac boat. 50% of the proceeds from the event goes to the Fire Department, 30% is given



to the owner of the first duck that passes the bridge, with the remaining 20% going to the owner of the 2nd placed duck. The event is an exciting one for all participants, as they compete with one

another to win. After the duck race, CAO Louisa McCreery planned a variety of games for

children at the Ferry Park. Some of the featured games included a tug-of-war, sack races, three-legged races, and a candy scramble at the end! It was a great community event enjoyed by all who attended. In the coming weeks, Waterhen will commence a fall harvest workshop provided through another grant held with NMFCCC and in the winter the skating program will remain active. Waterhen strives to involve community members through programming funded by grants and is succeeding!



COMMUNITY MEMBER RECOGNITION

Northern Association of Community Councils (NACC) held their annual general meeting August 20-22, 2024. NACC recognized multiple community members for their dedicated service to their communities, and Excellence of Service awards have been presented by the Honourable Anita R. Neville, Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba.

The award recipients are listed below:



Carl Sabiston, Mayor - Spence Lake

Carl has been on council for over 20 years, with the past 16 years as Mayor. Being a long-time resident, Carl's knowledge of the area has been a great help in problems that might arise. Carl always demonstrates professionalism in council meetings. He is willing to help new council members with his knowledge.

Kevin goes above and beyond in all areas. He is always available to offer assistance whenever it is needed. Kevin is friendly, cheerful and has earned the respect of all of council and employees.



Kevin Mowat, Councilor / Deputy Mayor - Matheson Island

John has been with council on a part-time basis for over 20 years. He covers every holiday at the water operating plant. Council is completely confident in him handling the plant with no issue.



Accepted on behalf of: John Taylor, Water Operator – Waterhen

COMMUNITY MEMBER RECOGNITION



Darlene Beck, Community Administrative Officer - Cross Lake

Darlene has been serving the community as Community Administrative Officer of Cross Lake for 50 years.

Ken has been a councilor for 33 years. Ken serves his community with pride. He is always willing to help his fellow councilors, residents and offer his knowledge of the history of the area.



Ken Spence, Councilor - Spence Lake

Doug Parker - Public Works Operator – Dawson Bay

Doug is the public works operator maintaining township since 1984.

Congratulations to new NACC President, Sheryl Matheson and new Executive Director, Andrea Kwasnicki!

Thank you to Reg Meade, outgoing president, for his years of service!

NORTHERN AFFAIRS UPDATES



CAMP Update

The Northern Affairs Branch within MNR has a mandate “to modernize the administration for all cottage subdivisions currently administered by the province outside of our provincial parks.”

The Department administers cottage programs in northern Manitoba across the 40 recognized cottage areas within the unorganized territory and outside the boundaries of provincial parks, municipalities, Northern Affairs Communities and First

Nations. The cottage subdivisions have increased to over 1,600 lots, with increased requests for services and governance support.

Phase 1 of the Cottage Administration Modernization Project (CAMP) was completed in 2023 with significant stakeholders’ engagement, including feedback from cottage residents. The first phase focused on the development of a regulatory and financial framework, while Phase 2 will be dedicated to implementing the plan. Prior to the commencement of Phase 2, NAB will engage with cottage and nearby community stakeholders. CAMP enquiries can be sent to MNRCottageAdmin@gov.mb.ca



Sherridon Public Works Garage

Infrastructure Audits

The Technical and Public Works & Workplace Health and Safety Consultants are currently completing the annual Infrastructure and Safety Audits.

Northern Affairs staff go to each community carrying clipboards and checklists ready to inspect and identify deficiencies. Some examples of inspected infrastructure include: community buildings, vehicles, roads, drainage, potable water supply, wastewater and solid waste disposal systems.

The goal of the audit is to ensure that community infrastructure is kept in good working order. For example, when a building is audited, the roof is inspected to ensure water is kept out and that the doors/windows are sufficiently sealed to keep the heat and air conditioning in. The audit season should be completed by the end of October.



Building Independence Program

Community councils can submit project proposals to the Northern Affairs regional office (attention: municipal development consultant) to provide employment opportunities for provincial employment and income assistance participants (EIA) in their community. Employment opportunities can range from offering jobs in general labour for community improvement to community positions in areas such as public works, administration or recreation. Projects will be approved on a first come first serve basis until program funds have been exhausted. Priority is given to projects that offer a minimum of 420 hours of employment over a six-month period.

NORTHERN AFFAIRS UPDATES



CSO Program Review

In August, Northern Affairs staff conducted an engagement session at the NACC AGM that presented an overview of the new CSO Program being offered by Manitoba Justice. This engagement session was well attended and will be used to build out future engagement in communities after the October elections. Community visits will be coordinated in the coming months and the review will be finished by the end of the fiscal year.



Fire Program Review

The Northern Affairs Branch is conducting a Fire Program Review of the fire response groups (public education, defensive, offensive), to be completed on March 31, 2025. The goal of the review is to provide program clarity and generate recommendations on broad areas of administration, funding, and reporting. A key part of the review is to listen to Northern Affairs Communities, Fire Chiefs, Deputy Chiefs and Public Education

Contact Persons, and use the information gathered to inform recommendations.

Upcoming engagement opportunities include:

- Fire Program Survey – Starting Fall 2024
- Listening Tour – Starting Fall 2024

REMINDERS

Nov.5 @ 1:30pm

Community Townhall (Teams Call)

Nov.11

Remembrance Day- STAT

Nov. 5-7

Public Works Employee Workshop
Holiday Inn Winnipeg South

Nov. 20 & 21 @ (8:30AM-4:30PM)

CAO Workshop
Holiday Inn Airport West

Dec. 3 @ 1:30pm

Community Townhall (Teams Call)

Dec. 25, 26 & 31

Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day- STAT

Municipal Calendar:

https://www.gov.mb.ca/mr/northern/pubs/na_manual/financial/appendix_f2-a.pdf

NORTHERN AFFAIRS STAFF PROFILE



Ashley Beck

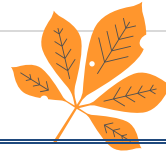
Introducing Ashley Beck who joined the Northern Affairs Branch as our Land Development Consultant! Ashley started with us on August 12, 2024, and will be working from our Winnipeg office. As the Land Development Consultant, she will be providing support to your community on land-related matters. This may include working with your community in updating and implementing land use planning documents such as development plans and responding to general land inquiries including mapping.

Land use planning is important for preserving the integrity of the existing community infrastructure, protecting the environment, promoting economic opportunities, enhancing public safety and health, planning for future infrastructure, system enhancements, and using resources efficiently. Planning at a community level allows community councils to administer, control, guide, and adapt development for their community needs and conditions. It is important to have strong by-laws within the development plan to provide the framework for a community. For success, it is critical that plans are followed, and a comprehensive review is undertaken every five years.

Ashley comes from Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure (MTI) and has been with the province for 19 years. She has a Bachelor of Science with a major in biology and a minor in geography. Her experience with MTI includes administration, winter roads, engineering, technical services, environmental services, roadside/land development and her last role was with Indigenous consultation. Ashley grew up in Northern Manitoba and you can find her dreaming up the next adventure with her husband and two dogs. As well, during her spare time she enjoys playing volleyball, ultimate frisbee and golf.

Ashley is available upon request to assist Councils in developing and updating their land use planning documents and can be contacted at Ashley.Beck@gov.mb.ca

GRANT WRITING RESOURCES




Grant Writing Tips


1. **Understand your own goals and assemble a team to help** achieve those goals.
2. **Set aside plenty of time.**
3. **Contact grant makers** before you write your proposal to be sure you clearly understand the grant program guidelines and contact them after it is submitted. Even if it is turned down, ask for feedback about your proposal's strengths and weaknesses for the next time.
4. **Talk to those who got funded** and ask for advice and check out the grant's recent awards.
5. **Show that you have a significant need** or problem in your proposal.
6. **Good proposals are easy to understand.** If you are short and to the point, and you've answered the key questions, your grant will be viewed as comprehensible and fundable.
7. **Have a reasonable and detailed budget.** Do your homework on costs. Your budget must closely match the described activities.
8. **Be realistic.**
9. **Describe both the broad goals and measurable objectives** of your project. Detail the activities that will accomplish the program's goals and objectives.
10. **Proofread!** Spelling and grammar errors do not convey a positive image. Have someone review your application.


For more information and grant opportunities please go to the [Manitoba Go! Portal](#)



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Please feel free to contact us with your comments, pictures or article suggestions, or to request additional copies.

We acknowledge that Manitoba is located on the Treaty Territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishininewak, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations, the ancestral lands of the Inuit, and the homeland of the Red River Metis.