

February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee

RE: Provincial Conference procedure, conduct, and preparation

Dear committee members,

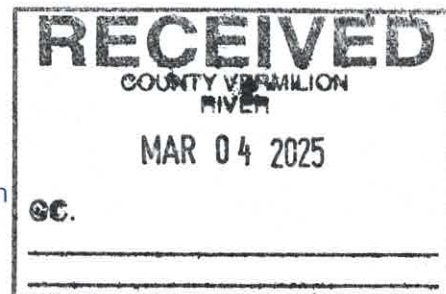
Our ASB left this year's Provincial ASB conference with three concerns regarding our resolution sessions: parliamentary procedure, conduct, and preparation.

We felt that the handling of debate and amendments could have been handled with greater leadership and procedural adherence. This did hamper the effective handling of some resolutions (like 3-25) and left many members on the floor frustrated. As such, we ask that the Provincial ASB Committee take measures to ensure effective proceedings are utilized and enforced to facilitate discussion and changes to resolutions more productively.

This leads us to our second concern: appropriate and constructive conduct by participants. The County of Northern Lights and Northern Sunrise County both have written letters to address the specifics of the poor decorum exhibited around resolution 13-25. We would like to add another layer to the consequences of poor decorum.

Our resolution process asks for humility and trust in each other to have meaningful and respectful discussions on topics prioritized by each region. Our geographic differences naturally lend to differences of opinion and priority across a province as vast as ours. But these differences should be treated with respect and with trust for the regional process to avoid the potential for regional rifts. The events of the resolution session fully violated said trust and increased the risk of regional divides within the province which risks jeopardizing our voice as a unified provincial organization. One of the critiques around resolution 13-25 was the suggestion that too many resolutions came from one municipality. Such criticism undermines our regional process, a process that requires regions to debate and vote on local resolutions put forward so to act as regional filters before resolutions come to the provincial level. If there is concern about the quantity or quality of resolutions coming from a region, it is better addressed through the Provincial Committee. These critiques are not suited to the provincial conference floor, or to be used as tools to shame or denigrate another municipality. Discussion must be meaningful and respectful, and this can only be achieved when individuals can trust that the debate has originated from positions of good faith. This leads to our final concern: preparation.

We are often asked to support regionally specific challenges in the context of a wider provincial lens. This often requires actions to be taken to further our knowledge, understanding, or sense of priority associated with a resolution. This year provided plenty of time between the release of the resolution package and the conference itself to undertake thorough pre-briefing and discussion regarding the



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resolutions. Some revisions and amendments will always bubble up from the energy and creativity of quality discussion on the floor, but many revisions and amendments can be carefully considered, crafted, and pre-communicated to enhance the quality of debate and to ease the process of forwarding amendments (friendly or otherwise). Open communication between municipalities ahead of resolution sessions benefits all parties involved, whether it be to challenge, clarify, or sponsor a resolution.

A role common to all of us ASBs is the legislated responsibility to advise the Minister responsible for agriculture. As much as this is a legislated responsibility, we should not take this role for granted. By ensuring we achieve quality procedural dynamics, adhere to high standards of conduct, and do our best to be as prepared as possible, we help gain and maintain a reputation for both the quality of resolutions forwarded and the quality of discussions and deliberation that go into refining and passing them. This would make attendance at our conference a meaningful and desired space for Ministers to allocate their scarce time.

Sincerely,



Tyler Airth  
Big Lakes County Reeve and ASB Chair

CC: all provincial municipal Agricultural Service Boards

