

# Local Government Asset Management Working Group

## Notes of June 3, 2009 Meeting

Meeting Location: BCIT (Downtown Campus) Room 820  
555 Seymour Street, Vancouver

### In Attendance:

Stan Westby (Chair)	City of Powell River
Glen Brown	Ministry of Community Development
Brian Bedford	Ministry of Community Development
Brittany Johnson	Ministry of Community Development
Susan Clift	Municipal Engineers Division, APEGBC
Daisy Foster	BC Water and Waste Association
Tom MacDonald	Local Government Management Association
Jeannette Austin	Public Works Association of BC
Gordon Brown	City of Campbell River
Tom Abbuhl	Centre for Infrastructure Management, BCIT
Sid Smith	District of Lake Country
Frank Blues	City of Prince George
David Main	BC Water and Waste Association
Janice Irwin	Government Financial Officers Association of BC
Neil Nyberg	Master Municipal Construction Documents Association
Brenda Gibson	Union of British Columbia Municipalities
Andrew Woods	District of Maple Ridge
Wally Wells	Wells Infrastructure Group Inc.

### Guests:

Barry Davis	City of Burnaby representing CNAM
Michael Mortimer (via tele. conf.)	Canadian Standards Association

### **1) Opening – Stan Westby**

The meeting was opened by Stan Westby as Chair at 9:00 A.M. Stan thanked BCIT (Tom Abbuhl) for hosting the meeting at their facilities.

Stan welcomed all and asked each person to introduce themselves and the group they represent with a short opening statement from each. This was concluded.

Stan welcomed two of new members:

- Brittany Johnson, Finance Group, Ministry of Community Development
- Frank Blues, City of Prince George

Employment changes were noted as follows.

- Kim Fowler, representing Planning Institute of British Columbia, joins the City of Victoria today (June 3) as Director of Sustainability.
- Gord Brown is joining the new municipality of the District of West Kelowna in August.

Dial-in connection was made with Mike Mortimer, Project Manager of the Canadian Standards Association in their Mississauga, Ontario office. There is an agenda item to advise the working group of the details of the CSA infrastructure project. Mike Mortimer asked to participate in the meeting to hear the other agenda items.

Stan Westby asked each member for a key point of interest to them and the group. These are summarized below:

- The work of the Group can be and should be politically important
- We must bridge the gap between technical, planning and financial
- How do we make order out of chaos?
- We must balance business planning and strategies with the detailed technical and financial requirements and rules
- We must be proactive in moving forward, not reactive
- Can asset management and benchmarking be married? Do both play a role one with the other?
- We must sort out competing group or at least the appearance of competing groups and all work together
- MMCD has part of the toolkit for AM
- There is a desire to add value to the AM process and the grant program.

The Chair thanked Tom Abbuhl for use of the BCIT facilities and for hosting the meeting.

Approval of Notes from March 12 meeting: With the addition of Daisy Foster, BCWWA, to the attendee list, it was:

MOTION:  
Moved by Tom Abbuhl  
Seconded by Daisy Foster

*“That the notes of March 12 be accepted and available for distribution”*

Carried unanimously

While the notes are acceptable in the form provided, future notes should have a summary action sheet as the first page.

Approval of Agenda:

MOTION:  
Moved by David Main  
Seconded by Brian Bedford

*“That the agenda for the June 3 meeting be adopted as presented”*

Carried unanimously

## 2) CNAM – Barry Davis

Barry outlined the history of CNAM starting with a workshop in Hamilton Ontario three years ago; the formation of a steering committee to look at a national organization and two subsequent successful national conferences in Halifax (2008) and Calgary (2009). The 2010 conference will be in May in Ottawa. At the Calgary Conference, the CNAM committee formalized the organization and completed incorporation documents. Tom Abbuhl, Frank Blues and Wally Wells from this group were at the Calgary conference. A membership structure was adopted and CNAM will be soliciting membership through 2009 and beyond.

Barry advised the Vancouver area is the preferred area for the 2011 CNAM conference. With CNAM incorporation, the financial risk is now assumed by CNAM as previously the sponsoring municipality underwrote the risk. The municipality will not assume financial risk. Burnaby would likely be the host. Barry would like the Working Group to be a sponsor in some form and help with program suggestions and promotion of the conference should it come to Vancouver.

Comments from the Group:

- Need to co-ordinate dates with other BC groups. BCCWA is usually the end of April. CNAM in Calgary this year was the following week. BCWWA includes AM sessions. We can help define program and identify local speakers.

- Need more focus on smaller communities. At the Calgary conference, most papers were given by consultants or large municipalities on complex systems. There was not much draw for small communities.
- Good paper given by Frank Blues on the work at Prince George.

MOTION:

Moved by David Main

Seconded by Andrew Woods

*“That the Local Government Asset Management Working Group support having the 2011 CNAM conference in the Vancouver area and will lend our support and that Barry Davis be authorized to carry that support to the CNAM Committee.”*

Carried unanimously

Barry Davis left the meeting

### 3) InfraGuide Presentation

David Main discussed the history of InfraGuide and the termination of the project for lack of federal funding in 2007. InfraGuide was a great success and is still referenced and used by many communities and often referenced by other countries. The way InfraGuide was created and the 50 Best Management Practices were carried out created a large network of people across Canada and the ability to communicate one with another after the personal contact of committee work. Unfortunately this was lost when InfraGuide was discontinued. InfraGuide material is still available on the web ([www.sustainablecommunities.fcm.ca/InfraGuide](http://www.sustainablecommunities.fcm.ca/InfraGuide)) and is in the possession of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Case Studies, best practices and e-learning tools are all on this site and can be viewed and most can be downloaded.

David referenced the video created by Australia that was shown last year at our workshop in Vancouver by Chris Champion. A similar video was created by InfraGuide in three modules. One module is for elected officials, the second for senior manager (non – technical such as CAO’s) and the third at Officials and managers on case studies and frequently asked questions. David showed the ‘elected officials module (16 minutes) and recommended all watch the rest and ensure our communities know of its availability. It is recommended that the LGAMWG include InfraGuide in its list of referenced communications material.

MOTION:

Moved by Neil Nyberg

Seconded by Sid Smith

*“That the Local Government Asset Management Working Group supports the use of InfraGuide and its use by communities throughout the Province.”*

Carried unanimously

4) PWABC Course and Training with BCIT – Jeanette Austin

Jeanette presented a brochure of new courses the Association has developed with BCIT for Public Works operations training and certification. It will lead to a “certified Public Works Supervisor”. The course has been developed with and will be delivered through the Centre for Infrastructure Management of BCIT. Additional courses will be added over time to allow for completion of a diploma.

Details are available on the PWABC website. ([pwabc.cpwa.net](http://pwabc.cpwa.net)) Jeanette will e-mail the details to all.

Tom Abbuhl also advised of a new course on the executive MBA aimed at Infrastructure and Asset Management. He handed out a brochure. Further details are available through the Centre for Infrastructure Management ([commons.bcit.ca/infrastructure](http://commons.bcit.ca/infrastructure))

7) Link for CSA presentation - Mike Mortimer

*This item was moved up on the agenda to accommodate the time difference with the connection to CSA Toronto. Karen Ferguson, CSA, was with Mike on part of the call.*

Mike prepared a PowerPoint presentation which was shown as Mike spoke to the content. CSA has a \$1.5 million contract with INFC to deliver product on infrastructure. Points noted:

- The project will complement InfraGuide with a focal point on practicality and implementation.
- There is a high priority on getting product out quickly.
- CSA are using the InfraGuide learning modules.
- CSA is not a government organization and has multiple sources of funding. We are looking at product that is sustainable
- For product, expert volunteers are brought in to help develop and test the product
- Want to produce credible product that will be used. CSA uses extensive references to other documents
- CSA has developed an Advisory Committee for the project. Glen Brown is a member of that committee.
- The website for continuous updates is [csa.ca/infrastructure](http://csa.ca/infrastructure)

Listed below is the outputs intended from the CSA program. (From the PowerPoint presentation.)

#### Seminars

- Storm water management
- Low impact development *September 2009*
- Road & Parking lot infiltration systems design *September 2009*

#### E-Learning

- Selecting a professional consultant *September 2009*

#### Publications

- Water Utilities
  - Performance improvement for small to medium sized water/wastewater utilities *September 2009*
  - Terminology for sewer defects & distress coding *April 2010*

Mike advised if there are projects this group has in mind that fit into CSA mandate, make them known and CSA will see if they can fit into their work.

The Chair thanked Mike for his presentation and keeping our BC group informed. There was mutual agreement we must maintain contact to share work, knowledge and experience.

#### 6) Update on NAMWG / NRTSI – Wally Wells

At the CNAM conference, Reg Andres co-chair of the Transition team for the National Round Table gave an update on the Roundtable. On the same panel Greg Chartier, Chair of the National Asset Management Working Group gave a presentation. Wally Wells used parts of both these presentations to give the LGAMWG an update on both initiatives.

The key point were:

#### NRTSI:

- Transition Team has switched from Engineers Canada to joint CSCE (Reg Andres) and CPWA (Ric Robertshaw)
- Project proposed including LGAMWG has not yet received final approval. The Contribution agreement, previously with Engineers Canada, is being switched over the CSCE.
- This year will be used to focus the Round Table towards membership and program. The intention is to have the first meeting of the National Round Table in the spring of 2010.

#### NAWMG:

- The AM Governance Framework has been completed and is posted on the nrtsi.ca website. The French version has been done with the assistance of INFC and will be posted shortly.
- The process to get endorsement of the Framework from the sponsoring agencies (CPWA/CSCE) is underway
- Letters, with a disk of the Framework, will be sent as soon as possible to agencies and governments. The agencies will be asked to adopt the Framework. The objective is to get the Framework as an accepted standard for use in Canada as a basis for carrying out Asset Management.

#### Comments from the LGAMWG:

- The slide showing all the groups involved (NRTSI) is very complicated and appears to have too many players involved to achieve good results
- It is good to have these updates, but we must focus on BC local communities
- The direction for both groups, collectively and independently seems unclear.

#### 5) Update from Organizations

##### a) Upcoming Events

- We are on the program for the LGMA conference in Nanaimo in June. Wally Wells will be speaking about our group.
- We have been asked to speak at the ESRI workshop (June 9) in Vancouver. While it is a commercial venture, it is an opportunity to get our message out. Wally Wells will be there to speak.
- We are on the program for PWABC in Williams Lake in September. Wally Wells will be speaking.
- We have asked Brenda Gibson to find us a spot of the UBCM program in late September. Brenda will look into this.

##### b) BCWWA

Our Group was represented by Brian Bedford and Wally Wells through a 20 minute presentation made at the conference. This presentation was part of a morning session where the Ministry of Community Development made a number of presentations. There were 1300 delegates at the conference with a number of concurrent sessions including our. Our audience was about 150 + people.

##### c) GFOA

Glen was in attendance at the GFOA conference in Kelowna. There was no specific presentation on the LGAMWG but there were presentations on asset management and PSAB 3150. Level of Service was the focus of some of the presentations and much of the discussion.

d) CNAM - covered above.

e) International TRB conference – Portland.

We have been invited as part of an international panel at the Transportation Research Board conference in Portland Ore. In late Oct. Stan Westby expects to be our speaker at that conference.

Note: The other items were group in to a one hour discussion before adjourning. They are reported below.

#### Moving forward:

a) Upcoming Workshop

Reference is made to the TRB Portland conference above. As Chris Champion from Australia will be in Portland in October, we have enquired about his availability. Chris can be in Vancouver October 16. Chris also advised they are issuing a new financial / technical document similar to PSAB 3150 but with technical input.

We are planning a one day workshop in Vancouver for Friday October 16. The focus will be small communities and level of service. The sponsors will be CIM of BCIT and the LGAMWG. CIM will do the leg work respecting managing the workshop.

More information will follow and the LGAMWG may be asked for help and input which will be done by e-mail. The intention is to finalize the program in July.

b) Policy on Asset Management

Gord Brown brought to the group an issue they had in Campbell River respecting Council decisions relevant to budget cuts affecting the quality of the assets. Council had no policy on AM to test their decisions against. The recommendation was made to prepare a draft policy that all Councils could consider passing. The Group agreed this was worth pursuing. In advance of the meeting a request was sent to all Group members for input. Two policy documents were received as background. Both were attached to the agenda.

Glen stated the Province would favour such a policy as it may follow the same avenue that the policy on water conservation has. That is, having a plan and policy is a condition of provincial grants for water conservation measures. Municipally, the sense was that if the communities had such a policy then they may starting engaging asset management more, especially the smaller communities, it would get a corporate commitment and they may make more informed integrated decisions respecting their assets.



After much discussion, it was agreed this is a valid activity for this group and that this is our first example of how we can carry out and manage specific projects. A task specific working group will be struck to oversee the work and report to the LGAMWG. The policy should be simple and be supported by a guideline. The rationale is a policy is adopted and is more difficult to change than a guideline. The policy will be the statement whereas the guideline will provide assistance and direction on implementation. A guideline can be changed and updated with ease as conditions change.

MOTION:

Moved by Andrew Wood

Seconded by Jeanette Austin

*“That the Local Government Asset Management Working Group support developing a draft policy and guideline for councils to consider on asset management and that a task specific working group be formed to carry out this task and report. The group shall include, Gordon Brown (chair), Neil Nyberg, Sid Smith, and Frank Blues”*

Carried unanimously

The Group is asked to use their Association networks to solicit such policies.

c) Provincial Study

Draft Terms of Reference were included with the Agenda package. Comments on this activity are to be sent in via e-mail by June 10. (No comments were received). Community and Rural Development are currently going through their purchasing group to call proposals for this study. We expect to award the contract in July. A progress report will be given to the group at the next meeting.

Once the contract is award, the LGAMWG members will be notified and we request all members use their Association membership tools to notify members. Once the list of municipalities / communities is submitted by the consultant, input will be sought from the group on the list, then assistance in notifying the communities.

Actions will be requested of Group members through July.

d) Road Map Study

Draft terms of reference have been received from Sid Smith and circulated to the other three communities. (Powell River, Campbell River and Tofino) A conference call will be held to review rather and finalize these. Each community will likely hire a consultant to do the work. Wally Wells will coordinate the LGAMWG input and the use of each of these as case studies to produce a generic document.

e) Further discussion re our future.

The points raised were:

- We need to look at where we want to be in one year and three years. The work in New Zealand shows the benefit of an integrated AM approach.
- Need a reference point such as Civic Info. Anyone in the Province should be able to source material.
- Need tools and resources for our communities. Need templates for small communities (Australian experience?)
- We need to think about the social side. The user. People, InfraGuide identified people.
- Need some benchmarks. What are we spending on infrastructure? Do we have data?
- PSAB 3150 is a compliance / accounting standard issue. While data from PSAB 3150 assists us but it is not financial planning. It does not identify the deferred maintenance. We need to move the next step beyond the accounting standard. There is a strong risk that Councils will think the PSAB result is the answer.
- Sustainable infrastructure plans. We need to define what they are. Asset Management is just part of the big picture. We need to communicate the big picture whereas right now we seem to be only communicating the pieces.

There being no further business at 3:05P.M.

*These notes are prepared by Wally Wells, Coordinator.  
kwwells@msn.com*

NOTE:

The next meeting is targeted for September 26 2009 at 9:00 A.M. at the BCIT downtown campus. Confirmation will come at a later date.