



Advocacy in Action

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MNL Symposium

May 4, 2024

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STRATEGIC ADVOCACY

CURRENT PRIORITIES

SUSTAINABLE MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Advance approach to water and wastewater infrastructure based on right-sized innovative solutions + promote asset management.



EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Lead municipal reconciliation and anti-racism efforts + promote, encourage, and support greater equity, diversity and inclusion across the sector.

A REGIONAL APPROACH

Ensure regional government implementation moves forward consistent with MNL approach + promote regional approach to challenges/solutions.



COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SAFETY

Support members to address health and safety challenges in their communities through research and advocacy + lead sector-wide housing and public transportation conversations.

MUNICIPAL FISCAL STABILITY

Reignite municipal-provincial fiscal framework advocacy + support research on alternate sources of revenue.



CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Revitalize climate change and climate resilience conversations as per historical MNL work in this area + use and update the 7-steps toolkit as foundation.

2023 Resolutions

Toward a Sustainable Future

12-2023

Municipal support for Universal Basic Income

10-2023

Resolution Requesting Increased Funding for Training Purposes

9-2023

Resolution Requesting an Increase in Maximum Municipal Capital Works Funding

8-2023

Regionalization

7-2023

Fee for Service Model for Volunteer Fire Department Response to Medical Calls

6-2023

Increased Stipend for Responding to Highway Motor Vehicle Accidents

5-2023

Adequate Compensation for Volunteer Fire Departments

4-2023

Municipal Accommodations Tax

3-2023

Tax for Vacant or Underutilized Properties

2-2023

Amend the Utilities and Cable Television Companies Act to allow municipalities to gain tax revenue from the provision of Internet/Data

1-2023

First Lien

Municipal Issues 2024: A Focus on Fiscal Stability

Fiscal Stability Struggles

Those efforts saw attention paid to many challenges in 2023. But none were more pervasive as affordability.

Inflation is hitting municipalities hard across Newfoundland and Labrador. It is such an issue that out of 11 member resolutions passed by delegates at MNL's annual general meeting (AGM) last fall, nine dealt with fiscal stability issues.

"That tells you where the minds of our members are," Nolan said. "That's been a conversation that we've been having for a few years now, many years, around fiscal framework and fiscal stability."

N.L. municipalities working for better fiscal stability

by Sean Meyer, Municipal World - in Governance, Leadership, Management

March, 2024



Municipalities across Newfoundland and Labrador faced the same challenges as their counterparts across the country in 2023. But Municipalities Newfoundland & Labrador CEO Rob Nolan said they also had to deal with obstacles that were more unique to their realities. Photo: Rob Nolan



Municipalities across Newfoundland and Labrador faced the same challenges as their counterparts across the country in 2023. But they also had to deal with obstacles that were more unique to their realities.

That said, there were some real accomplishments as well. And not just for municipalities, but the organization that represents their interests as well. Municipalities Newfoundland & Labrador (MNL) was formed in 1951. Their current CEO just finished his first full year on the job in 2023.

Budgetary requests

- Increasing funding to support municipal fire departments and municipal training.
- Addressing lost municipal revenue because of outdated Taxation of Utilities and Cable Television Companies Act.
- Supporting larger municipalities (7 without access to MOGS) to access increased funding under the Multi-year Capital Works program.
- Discussing options for revenue sharing.

Increased funding for municipal fire departments

5-2023

Adequate Compensation for Volunteer Fire Departments

Active



Therefore, be it resolved that MNL lobby the appropriate Government agencies to provide adequate compensation to volunteer Fire Departments when they are responding to non-traditional firefighting roles.

Number 5-2023
Year 2023
Category A
Town/Sponsor Town of New-Wes-Valley

6-2023

Increased Stipend for Responding to Highway Motor Vehicle Accidents

Active



Therefore, be it resolved that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador will lobby the Department of Justice and Public Safety to consider the financial realities faced by municipalities, and subsequently, to increase the stipend provided to municipalities for their services in responding to highway motor vehicle accidents.

Number 6-2023
Year 2023
Category A
Town/Sponsor Town of Gander

7-2023

Fee for Service Model for Volunteer Fire Department Response to Medical Calls

Active

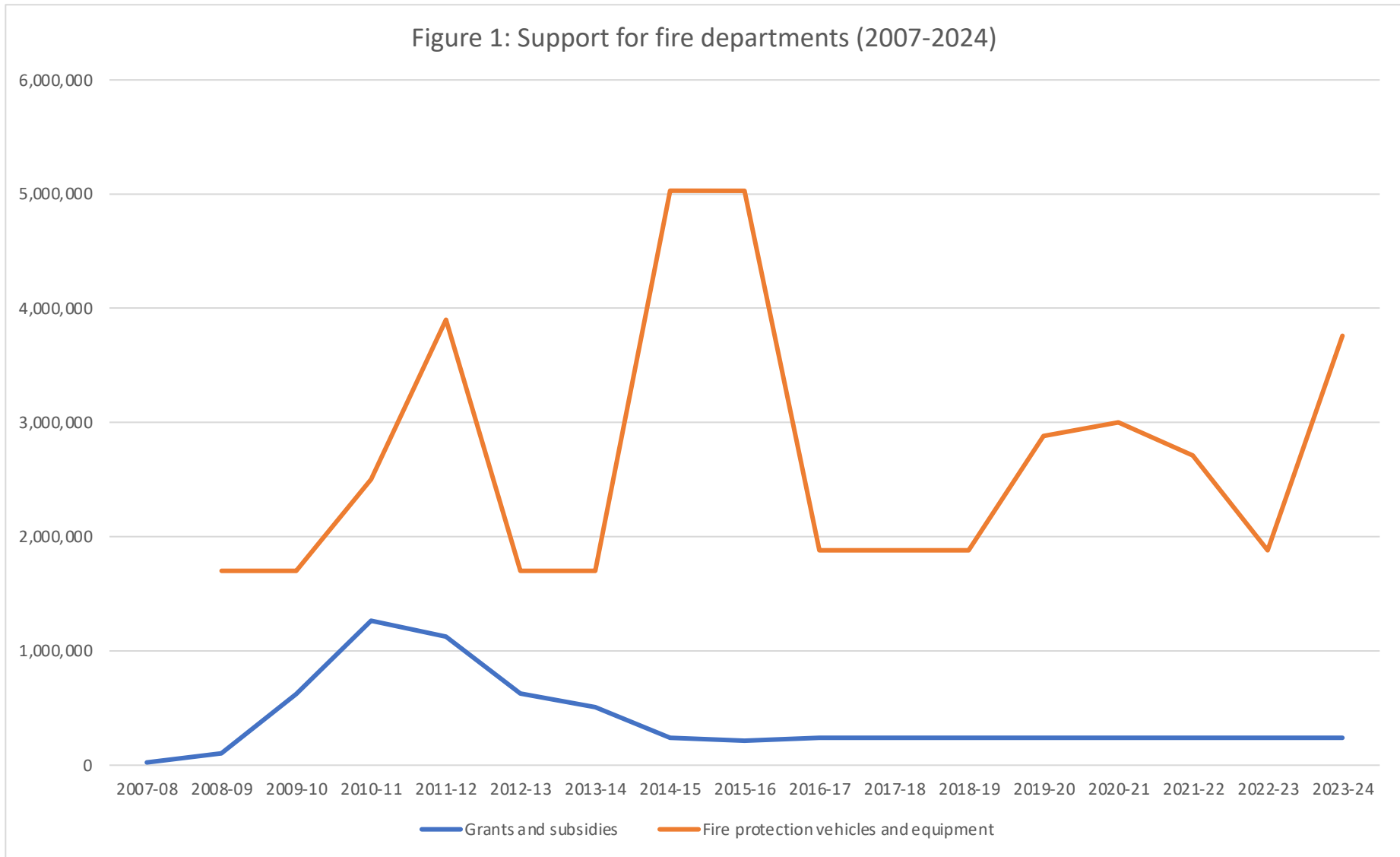


Therefore, be it resolved: Where a Volunteer Fire Department is requested to provide an initial response for an Ambulance Call or where the Fire Department is requested to provide additional support in the execution of a Medical Call that a fee for service be provided to the responding Volunteer Fire Dept for services rendered.

Number 7-2023
Year 2023
Category A
Town/Sponsor Town of Harbour Main-
Chapel's Cove-Lakeview

Increased funding for municipal fire departments

- Fire departments access special assistance funding for Response Outside Municipal Boundary (Department of Justice and Public Safety).
- The rate available for reimbursement under this policy has remained at \$350/three hours (50\$ every additional hour) since 2015. The policy has not been updated since 2018.
- The cost to respond to incidents outside of municipal boundaries has increased and the need to respond has also increased.
- Budget allocations available for this special assistance remain unchanged (\$241,000), while funding for fire protection vehicles and equipment has fluctuated (Figure 1)



Source: Main estimates, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2007-2024

Private Member's Resolution (March 15, 2023)

- Urging government to explore innovative solutions and best practices that will further support our volunteer firefighters
 - Notice of motion—Conway Ottenheimer, H.
 - Amendment—Moved Howell, K. : insertion after government “to work with communities and the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of fire services” (carried)
 - Motion carried.

Source: [Hansard](#).

Funding request: municipal fire departments

- Increase rate for special assistance funding for Response Outside Municipal Boundary to \$350/hr to a maximum of \$1500.
- Increase grants and subsidies budget by \$400,000 in 2024-25 to:
 - Enable increased special assistance rate for municipal fire departments and support their response to incidents, particularly MVAs on highways (\$340,000)
 - Support \$60,000 for NLAFS/MNL outreach to fire departments on non-traditional roles and budgetary pressures
 - Increase grants and subsidies budget by \$340,000 in 2025-26 to account for increased costs for fire departments to respond to non-traditional calls.

Increased funding for municipal training

10-2023

Resolution Requesting Increased Funding for Training Purposes

Active



THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL) shall actively lobby for additional funding dedicated to training purposes.

FURTHER RESOLVED that MNL shall engage with relevant governmental bodies, funding sources, and stakeholders to advocate for increased financial support to address the rising costs of training, including travel, accommodation, and meal expenses.

FURTHER RESOLVED that MNL shall work in collaboration with municipalities across the region to collect and present data demonstrating the increased demand for training and the associated financial burden.

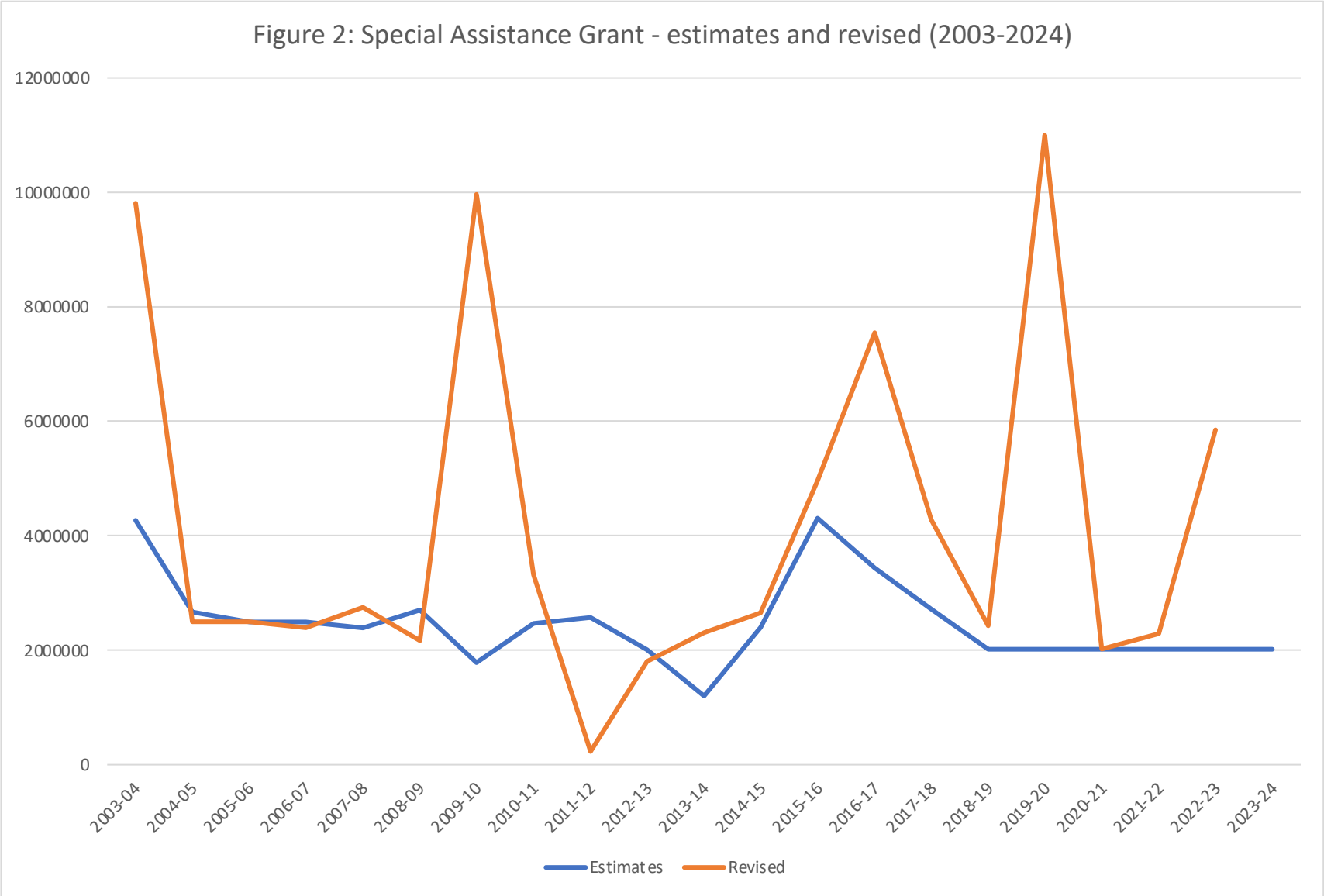
FURTHER RESOLVED that MNL shall stress the importance of well-trained councillors and staff in delivering effective governance and maintaining compliance with legislative requirements.

FURTHER RESOLVED that MNL shall continue to support and encourage municipalities to facilitate training opportunities for volunteer councillors, ensuring their continued growth and commitment to public service.

Number	10-2023
Year	2023
Category	A
Town/Sponsor	Town of Cow Head
Status	Active

Increased funding for municipal training

- Municipal staff and councils are increasingly expected to take on more training (mandatory and otherwise).
- Training is essential for well run municipalities.
- The cost of attending training has increased but funding available to municipalities to support training has not.
 - Matched training fund (\$1000 per municipality) has not increased in well over a decade.
 - Rates to support attendance at MNL/PMA events have not increased in well over a decade.
- Budget estimates under the Special Assistance Grant (MAPA) have not increased since 2018-19 (\$2.014 million) and are below allocations in early 2000s (Figure 2).



Source: Main estimates, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2003-2024

Municipal training costs, Cow Head example

	Corner Brook	Gander	St. John's
Return mileage (@0.5351/km)	\$177.65	\$447.34	\$531.94
Accommodations (2 nights @ \$139/night)	\$278	\$278	\$278
Per diem (2 days @ \$52.44/day)	\$104.89	\$104.89	\$104.89
Total (rounded)	\$560	\$830	\$915

* Does not include registration costs

Funding request: municipal training

- Double training amount available to municipalities to \$2000; remove matching requirement.
- Increase special assistance grant funding by \$412,500 going forward to account for increased training costs for municipalities.

Addressing lost municipal revenue

2-2023

Amend the Utilities and Cable Television Companies Act to allow municipalities to gain tax revenue from the provision of Internet/Data

Active



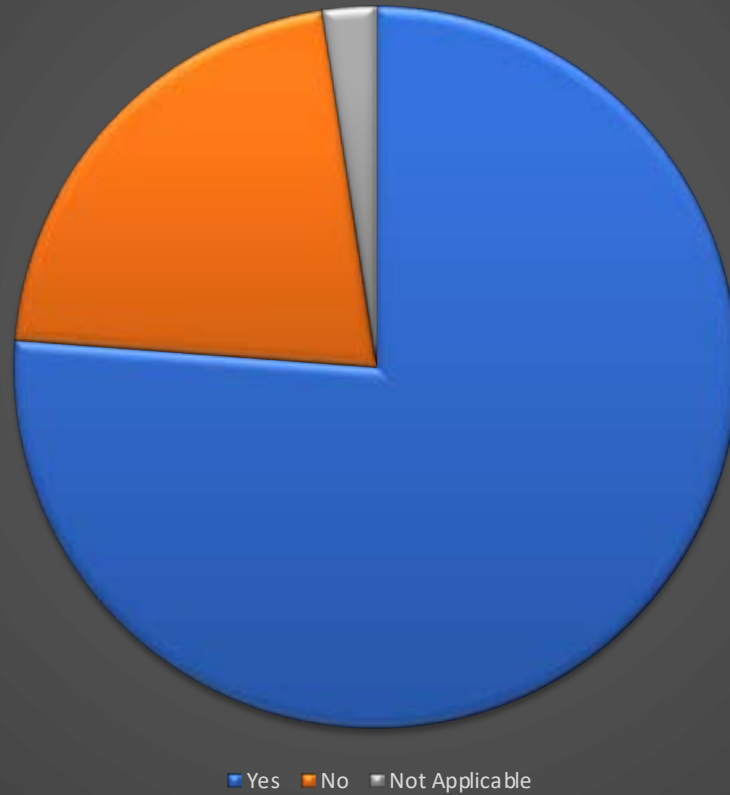
Therefore be it resolved that Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador lobby the Department of Finance to amend Section 2(h) of the Utilities and Cable Television Companies Act to include Internet/ Data under the definition of the words Utility so that municipalities of this province are able to tax this utility and gain much needed tax revenue.

Number	2-2023
Year	2023
Category	A
Town/Sponsor	Town of Peterview
Status	Active

Addressing lost municipal revenue

- The Taxation of Utilities and Cable Television Companies Act is outdated.
- It does not account or provide provisions for Internet and data.
- Because telecommunications companies have increasingly shifted to Internet-based services, gross revenues available to municipalities for taxation under this act have decreased.

Figure 3: Lost revenue from utilities taxation - telecommunications
(n=43)



Source: MNL/PMA survey to PMA members, 2024

Request: Lost revenue from utilities taxation

- Commit to reviewing The Taxation of Utilities and Cable Television Companies Act with the lens of lost revenue for municipalities because of definitional/service provision outdatedness.

Other requests

- Supporting larger municipalities (7 without access to MOGS) to access increased funding under the Multi-year Capital Works program.
- Discussing options for revenue sharing.



Thank you!

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