



Representing the Districts of Kenora, Rainy River and Thunder Bay  
P.O. Box 10308, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6T8  
www.noma.on.ca  
p. 807.683.6662 e. admin@noma.on.ca

October 6, 2023

Attention: Mayor and Council

### **NOMA Board Meeting Summary Report for September 27, 2023**

**Presentation & Discussion re Human Health Resources:** Dr. Murchison et al. provided presentation. NOMA has been actively advocating for health care. There is a shift to Ontario Health Teams environment. A discussion occurred regarding NOSM and how it was meant to bring in Northern students who were meant to stay in the North, but it has shifted and those doctors are not always staying in the north. We need incentives for the north for recruitment and retention and do a better job to market the northwest. Need to review NOSM funding and Northern retention program as it is currently front loaded (40% upfront). Perhaps move to free tuition and put students in the north and should they leave require repayment. We need to address the consistent gap in human resources. Municipalities need to make it easy for new doctors to come into town by having a facility ready. Municipalities are pit against each other for the recruitment of doctors. We need long term strategy to get doctors here. Need to advocate MOH to change Nurse Practitioner funding. Discussion re locums and agency nurses and the issue of compensation and funding. An idea was presented to have a permanent base in NWO to have locums and contract nurses that move around the region where they are needed. Travel in the Winter is a deterrent for nurses and locums to come to the North. A discussion occurred to recruit NPI to write a paper to be provided to government at ROMA to look at a better healthcare model for NWO and looking at the rural care model in BC.

**NOSM Resolution & Letter of Support:** NOMA is meeting With Dr. Verma on October 19 to discuss NOSM. We will be including in our discussion that doctors were meant to be trained in the north, by people in the north in order to stay in the North. A review of the NOSM funding structure is needed. NOMA passed resolution 2023-08: Support NOSM funding to address the urgent need for health human resources in Northern Ontario and send a letter of support to government. **\*NOMA asks Clerks and CAO's to share with Council and support.**

**Briefing note to Northern Ontario Municipalities Association Board:** Rick Dumas reported that Northwestern Ontario will experience great struggle in terms of health. ED will reach out to NPI to determine if they are able to write a paper on rural healthcare and look at the BC framework to see if it would be successful in our region. NOMA would bring this to government at ROMA 2024 in January. Rick will bring this forward to AMO through the Northern Caucus.

**AMO Delegation Results:** ED shared the main successes of the delegation meetings including the province will restore the 75% provincial and 25% municipal cost-share ratio for all cost-shared programs and will restore 100% funding for those programs identified as such in the public health budget for 2018-2019. Additionally, base funding for public health units will be increased by 1% annually for the next three years so that Ontario can prepare and plan with certainty. The province will provide funding for the municipal consultation process of crown lands. In this process, municipalities will be able to evaluate all crown land within municipal

borders in Northern Ontario to determine if they are eligible to be sold for development to increase the housing supply and expand their property tax base. NOMA asked the province to secure times around conference for virtually meetings, which they agreed was a good idea. We asked for an update on Railway consultation but were told it is still being worked on.

**NOMA Board Proposed Meal Plan Policy Change:** NOMA has amended its meal plan policy as follows: “Meal costs to a maximum of \$115 per 24 hours including \$25 for breakfast, \$35 for lunch and \$55 for dinner.”

**Options for AMO Conference Reimbursement for Board Members:** The 3 options were presented to the Board. A discussion occurred and option one was approved. This option revises the honorariums to include all board members. This option is an additional \$17,000 to NOMA budget annually, payable in April of each year in recognition of service over the preceding 12 months. Compensation for Executive VP’s and Board Members will be adjusted to reflect the number of board meetings attended and participating in email communications and meetings outside of NOMA Board. Board Meeting attendance will account for 60% (6 meetings at 10% each) and responding to emails and attending outside meetings will account for 40% (10% each quarter April-June, July-Sept, Oct-Dec, Jan-March). This is to be reviewed annually. The President and VP will retain their current honorariums of \$5000 & \$2000 respectively. Executive Vice Presidents will receive \$1,500 and Board Members will receive \$1,000.

**SNOED 101 – Intern Enrolment:** The NOMA Board approve the Strategic Plan Intern to be enrolled in SNOED 101 in January 2024 and her registration fee be paid.

**Black Ash Tree ERO:** It was determined that the ED will reach out to Ian Dunn at OFIA to determine what their comments will be for the ERO and if they perceive this as an issue. A comment was made that should this move forward as it is the policy would decimate Rainy River and Kenora region economics and forest industry. Lisa Teeple made note that Northwestern Ontario Municipalities and the agricultural sector in our region were not consulted.

**Resolution for Strategic Plan Intern to attend meetings with ED:** The Board approved the Strategic Plan Intern, Katia Borjas, to attend all meetings and events with the Executive Director, when appropriate, and all expenses be paid up to a maximum of \$5000 per calendar year.

### **Municipal Association/League Updates:**

**TBDML** – Meeting last week in Dorion. They discussed their strategic Plan, the key needs in the district, and how to bring the messaging back to NOMA and Government.

**KDMA** – Fred Mota reported still concerns with doctors & crown land. They have a meeting on October 12<sup>th</sup> in Dryden to demine where the 2024 AGM will take place.

**RRDMA** – Doug Hartnell reported had they met last week and had a dismal turnout with only 25 people in attendance. Looking at having AGM on Jan 13, 2024.

### **Strategic Plan Report:**

- The “Primer on Northwestern Ontario” and “Why visit Northwestern Ontario” are posted on the website and up-to-date as changes were made as a result of survey responses.
- Have discussed potential pillars to guide economic development plan. Will schedule an executive meeting to discuss further. Will discuss potential working groups.
- In the process of collecting asset management plans and information from municipalities. **Please sent AMP to Katia if have not already done so.**

- A dedicated "Climate Resilience" page has been posted on the NOMA website to showcase strategies for enhancing the region's resilience against climate challenges.
- Updated Funding/Grant opportunities on website.
- We have received 31 responses on Elected Officials and 12 on Administration survey to date. **\*Please ensure you complete this survey if you have not done so already\***

### **Executive Director Report:**

- The media release regarding AMO Delegation Outcomes was shared with membership. We meet jointly with NOSDA and FONOM regarding NOSM funding, Employment Services, Contract Nurses, and our upcoming release of the next paper in the NPI series at the ROMA Conference.
- NOMA Board met with Minister Patty Hajdu to discuss Mental Health & Addictions, the issues brought forward at AMO, and housing challenges.
- Boreal Caribou Workshop changed date to October 18/19. Rick Dumas to attend.
- **It was determined that Victoria Inn will be the venue for the 2024 NOMA Conference and AGM that is to take place April 24-26.**

### **Notable Meetings Attended:**

- Met with NPI to discuss economic development Plan for Northwestern Ontario.
- Met with Ontario Northland to obtain videos showing driver conditions.
- Boreal Caribou Science Plan Development
- MTO re: Provincial Towing oversight
- IESO – Long term RFP Community Engagement Information Session
- Northwestern Telecommunications Consultation meeting with NDP – discussed lack of reliable and affordable broadband and cell services, dead spots, and safety concerns, Star link as a potential solution for rural and remote areas.

### **Issue Tracker Updates:**

**OPP:** OPP costs went up \$41 per household in Red Lake area. Kenora has gone up 7.5%. OPP costs are unsustainable. Kenora closed LCBO at 2pm on Sunday due to service calls to reduce impact on hospital.

**Mining:** Fred Reported Kinross Gold mine going in north of Red Lake and construction starts late next year. Lots of prospects happening as new lithium mine to come in as well. A comment made that when move operations underground they do not pay taxes. Rick and Fred replacing Mark Vermette on file.

**NWMO:** Next meeting is September 28th, 2023, in Toronto. Mayor Kahoot and Jason Young are going to Finland in November to view facility.

**Railway:** Kevin Holland has said the railway task force will be created soon.

**NOSM:** Physician/Nursing Recruitment: ED noted meeting with NOSM October 19 from 1-2pm. Last week Wendy B and Lisa Teeple attended Ontario Health Teams meeting. A note was made that we need to include in our discussion with NOSM to prioritize northern students even with lower marks than someone in the south as they are more likely to stay in the north.

**Energy:** There is an Energy Symposium in Toronto Nov 2-3. NOMA will be hosting a Northwestern Ontario 1 day energy symposium. A note was made to include a speaker on concerns over current and future supply. Enbridge can sponsor if requested by Oct 31.

**The next NOMA Board meeting takes place November 22, 2023, in Thunder Bay, Ontario.**

Please note the following correction from the June 20 Board meeting summary: **The next Learning Morning is scheduled for December 6<sup>th</sup> from 9-11am** NOT November 29<sup>th</sup>.

Please contact me at any time if you wish to discuss any NOMA matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrea Strawson".

Andrea Strawson  
Executive Director of NOMA  
(807) 683-6662  
[admin@noma.on.ca](mailto:admin@noma.on.ca)