

Update on the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association – November 4th, 2009

At the special general meeting of CPRA on June 22nd, 2009, a new governance structure for the association was adopted which resulted in the creation of a national alliance of provincial and territorial partners. Each P/T partner has identified a representative (and alternate) to sit on the CPRA Board of Directors and three meetings of the new Board have occurred: by teleconference on July 14th and September 29th; in person on October 27/28 immediately preceding the annual conference of the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. We are very pleased to report positive progress to our general membership across the country.

Our October agenda set out some key objectives:

- To review in detail the financial situation of CPRA and identify elements of a debt reduction strategy;
- To discuss short-term strategic priorities;
- To consider ways to evolve our shared leadership and accountability model.

The Board of Directors approved the CPRA audit for the fiscal year ended March 31st, 2009, noting that the accumulated deficit has been contained and will be reduced significantly during the current fiscal year. A finance committee is working out the details of the debt reduction plan with a view to completely eliminate the accumulated deficit within two years.

The Board engaged in a mapping exercise to identify strategic priorities. A strategic development committee will evolve this work, focusing on a communications strategy/protocol, renewing the Canada Gets Active project next year, and developing a framework for a national recreation summit in 2011 and a renewed engagement with our strategic partners including but not limited to the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council (ISRC), the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and the Canadian Parks Council (CPC).

Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) will be hosting a national exchange during their annual forum in Niagara Falls, April 6-10, 2010. Details will be sent to the general membership as they become available.

The October meeting saw full participation by all members of the alliance and there was a strong sense of collaboration and partnership that set the foundation for a renewed and revitalized CPRA. The meeting also provided an opportunity to meet the Interim Executive Director of CPRA, Chantal Courchesne of AMCES (Association Management, Consulting and Evaluation Services). Chantal has done a great job “putting our house in order,” and the contract with AMCES was extended to April 30th, 2010 to ensure the stability of the alliance. Chantal will be leading the development of a business plan for adoption by the Board in April.

We extend to Alberta Recreation and Parks Association our appreciation for all meeting arrangements and for their kind hospitality. This first face-to-face meeting of the new CPRA Board promises a bold and bright future for the renewed CPRA alliance.