



## 2024 Year in Review - Newsletter

As the year comes to an end it's time to review the work ASVA has done on behalf of you, our members, and celebrate our accomplishments. It's been another busy year for ASVA. We hosted a very successful conference again this year. Our members commented that the educational sessions were some of the best they ever attended.

We continued to engage with government officials including Ministers, MLAs, and government staff. The relationships we have built over the years have been important to the successes we have experienced in advocating on your behalf. We discussed a wide range of topics that are important to you. The list is long and includes items such as electricity prices, golf carts, FCSS, supports for Seniors and vulnerable Albertans, LGFF, CCBF, Asset Management, Water and Wastewater Systems, and LAEA.

Below are summaries of the items that ASVA believes are the most important to members. There is also a peek into what we will be working on in 2025. The list is not exhaustive and we look forward to providing updates throughout the upcoming year.

### **Golf Carts**

The Government of Alberta reacted positively and quickly to the Summer Village resolution to allow golf carts to operate legally on municipal roads. They have implemented a pilot project and we are very pleased that they took a minimalist approach to setting the rules for golf cart use. If you are interested, more information can be found here; <https://www.alberta.ca/golf-carts-on-public-roads>. One of the first steps is to have a bylaw approved by Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors. The ASVA website has two examples of golf cart bylaws that have been approved through the process. Please feel free to use them.

### **Education Property Tax - retaining more funding for local priorities**

ASVA presented a proposal to lower the Education Property Tax requisition to Minister McIver and Municipal Affairs. This reduction would benefit all municipalities and enable them to utilize the freed-up tax space for their infrastructure needs. The proposal aligns well with the Minister's mandate letter.

The advantages of the ASVA proposal are:

1. The cost of this proposal is \$200 million. It is 20 percent of what has been proposed by others. ABmunis and RMA proposed a \$1B increase to the LGFF pot and an ABmunis member resolution proposed to reduce the Education Property Tax by \$1B.
2. All municipalities would have their Education Property Tax requisition reduced creating tax space for them to step into,



3. For municipalities with a population of 2500 or less, i.e. 60 percent of Alberta municipalities, it is a more efficient and effective method of putting money in their hands than increasing the size of the LGFF pot, and
4. 40 percent of Alberta municipalities would pay nothing and not have any Education Property Tax requisition.

After reviewing the ASVA proposal, Minister McIver responded that “the Government of Alberta is willing to explore innovative approaches that can support long-term success for Albertans and municipalities. Municipal Affairs will examine the ASVA proposal in further detail as we continue to explore ways to better support local infrastructure and service delivery.” Minister McIver thanked ASVA for sharing our proposal with him. He concluded by saying, “I appreciate the association’s initiative and commitment to supporting the communities you represent.”

#### **LGFF Time Limit to Use Allocated Funds**

At the recent ASVA Conference, members expressed concerns with the current rule on the Time Limit to Use LGFF Funds, being that funds can only be carried forward for five years. ASVA members would like to see this time limit increased to ten years. In addition, members expressed a desire to have Borrowing Costs returned to the list of eligible expenses for LGFF. If implemented, both items would have a positive impact on a Summer Village’s ability to complete large infrastructure projects. Both of these upgrades to LGFF rules were brought to the attention of Minister McIver and discussed.

After reviewing the ASVA proposal, Minister McIver responded that he “appreciated ASVA’s efforts to help our members make use of LGFF funding.” He went on to say, “Municipal Affairs is not considering any changes to the LGFF Capital program at this time.” However, he appreciated the ASVA’s perspective on spending time limits and borrowing costs and will take this into consideration if a program review takes place in the future. He concluded by saying, “Thank you again for sharing your feedback on the LGFF Capital program.”

#### **IT Security Services**

At the Annual Conference, one of the educational sessions highlighted the need for a robust IT security system and identified that many Summer Villages might lack that level of security. The attendees suggested that ASVA do further research into what might be available for Summer Villages, on a Summer Village budget. The ASVA is in discussion on a couple of options and when we have finalized those offerings, we will communicate them to you.

#### **Municipal Census Regulation – Summer Villages and Temporary Residents**

The new Municipal Census Regulation allows municipalities to conduct their own census. There would be two reasons for doing that; 1) if you believe your Federal census count is low, therefore reducing the amount of government grant funds you receive, or 2) a desire to understand how many people



overnight in a Summer Village on the busiest weekends of the year. The regulation would allow you to ask that question and the answer could provide valuable information for infrastructure or emergency response plans. If you want to complete a 2025 census, you must let Municipal Affairs know by February 28, 2025. The ASVA is available to help you understand the benefits of doing a census.

### **Elected Official Orientation Training**

Recent changes to the MGA identified a need to update how Elected Official orientation training is provided and the timelines to do so. Since 2025 is an election year, your Administration will need to manage the changes and ASVA is working with others to help provide support for your Administration.

Orientation training is now a two-part process with specific timelines for each part. Part 1 of the training needs to be delivered before the first Organizational meeting and Part 2 can be deferred, by Council resolution, to 90 days after the election. ASVA is working with others to create a Part 1 orientation handbook that could be cost-effectively delivered by your Administration. Stay tuned for more information on this topic.

### **CAO Focus Group Sessions**

In 2025, the ASVA will host a series of virtual CAO Focus Group sessions. The sessions are meant to provide a forum where CAOs can learn and discuss the issues that are important to them. It will provide an opportunity to network with other Summer Village CAOs. The ASVA will be reaching out to CAOs early in the new year to gather a list of topics for these sessions.

### **Final Thoughts**

The coming year is an election year. For those who are not running again, thank you for everything you have done to serve your communities. For those running again, thank you for your continued dedication and the ASVA looks forward to doing what we can to help you serve your Summer Village.

The ASVA will be looking for new Board Members in September. If you are interested, please contact me or your local area representative to get a better understanding of what we do and the time commitment of serving on the ASVA Board.

As we all look forward to a new year, the ASVA wants to thank all of you for your continued support. We must all stick together as a larger voice gets more recognition. If you have any questions, suggestions, or comments, please, never hesitate to call or email our Executive Director, Kathy Krawchuk at 780-236-5456 or [execdirector@asva.ca](mailto:execdirector@asva.ca) or [info@asva.ca](mailto:info@asva.ca)

Warmest Regards.

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President, ASVA