



Thinking
beyond
the box

Stewardship Ontario

February 13, 2018

Mr. Dave Gordon
Association of Municipalities of Ontario
200 University Avenue, Suite 801
Toronto, ON M5H 3C6

Via email DGordon@amo.on.ca

Dear Dave:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us to discuss how Stewardship Ontario and municipalities can move forward to complete the work initiated by the Accord partners last Spring and under the terms set in the Minister's Program Request letter of August 14th, 2017.

As we indicated in our meeting, Stewardship Ontario and the stewards are committed to completing an amended Plan as a means to transition to the RRCEA. As our partners, you will play an integral role in the transition to full producer responsibility. We are grateful for all of the efforts of the municipal sector in contributing to Plan development so far.

However, as we all know, our joint work is not finished and key elements require more discussion and alignment.

With all of this in mind, the Stewardship Ontario Board meeting on January 25 considered three options for action:

1. Abandon this process entirely and immediately and signal that Stewardship Ontario will not be able to fulfil the Minister's instruction.
2. Approve the draft plan with changes considered over the period of consultation and submit the draft to RPRA.
3. Seek out a new process and a potentially more agreeable outcome directly with the municipal sector.

In its deliberations, the Board considered that:

- First, Stewardship Ontario and the stewards have signaled support for producer responsibility and the RRCEA so an abandonment of the draft plan would be inconsistent with the position taken to date.

- Second, merely approving a plan in the face of serious municipal concerns and the need of that community for more information would be both disrespectful to the municipal sector and would reflect poorly on the consultative process attempted in these intervening months, and
- Third, success for all parties can only be assured by a greater degree by patience, clarity of intent and strategic candour and a vigorous yet disciplined exchange of meaningful operational ideas between the two principle parties structured so as to better address their respective concerns.

The Board has elected not to abandon the process nor to submit a plan that does not have sufficient municipal support. Rather, the Board determined that the most prudent and respectful course of action would be to propose a new, different engagement with the municipal sector consistent with the support for producer responsibility signaled by the steward community and Stewardship Ontario with a view to completing the transition under the WDTA in accordance with the requirements of the Minister's August letter and the Act.

We recognize the problems inherent in the consultation process followed to this point. That approach, similar to what is used in government policy development, has Stewardship Ontario propose initiatives or ideas while requiring stakeholders to either agree or oppose. It is not sufficiently iterative to work through matters of more complex operational detail nor does it allow for the more fulsome discussions around policy issues that are often intertwined. In effect, given the history between the parties, the current process hinders Stewardship Ontario and the Accord participants' ability to complete the work necessary to agree on critical operational details in support of the plan. Our joint work is not finished and regretfully, the process utilized may be contributing to discord and suspicion.

As a result, we would very much like to engage the municipal sector in a joint process that will allow us to work out our transition blueprint with the detail necessary to establish clarity about how the transition will proceed.

We will need to work together to develop these details through a collaborative decision-making process that enables us to resolve any issues and concerns in real time. That process starts first and most importantly with a different governance model on how the Blue Box transition implementation will take place. That model



Stewardship Ontario

should last for so long as there continues to be the need to balance the needs of the people who resolve issues and those who design solutions throughout the effort, and is one which provides for joint, iterative working groups of municipal and steward representatives supported as appropriate by other relevant, affected stakeholders.

We certainly welcome your views and the views of others on how most effectively to resource the various task areas and should you agree to join us on this journey, we would need to engage in a more practical discussion about process, people, the work that will be undertaken, the level of commitment required and the estimated time to finish the work.

We would like to enlist your support to allow this process to unfold in ways that will allow both Stewardship Ontario and the municipal sector to put their best work forward so we can move on with the transition to full producer responsibility in the province of Ontario.

As we indicated, the draft Plan is not yet complete and continues to be a work in progress. Our intention is to share this draft with stakeholders in the next few weeks. We will work with RPRA to develop the stakeholder engagement plan that will flow from that draft. We will want to work with the municipal sector to ensure that the stakeholder engagement plan coincides with our efforts in this new emerging process in order to properly deal with policy issues and operational issues, all with a view to moving us all to an approvable plan.

We look forward to continuing our dialogue on the proposal for moving forward. We would like to discuss this framework with the Accord participants as a logical next step to our conversation of this morning. Let us know if that would be acceptable to your constituency.

Yours sincerely,

John D. Coyne
Chair,
Stewardship Ontario