President's Message

January 26, 2017

MEA Members

Welcome to 2017 – I am honoured to be your President for the next year and I am sure it is going to be a positive year for our Association as we move forward with several major issues. It is indeed a privilege to represent the Municipal Engineers of Ontario. Our 57th Annual Workshop was held last November and was again an outstanding success. Thanks again to the local St. Catharines organizing committee. Presentations from the workshop are now available on the MEA web site – www.municipalengineers.on.ca. Check them out, they are great references.

While you are on the web site, you should also check out the new discussion forum. This forum is available to provide an exchange of ideas and discuss issues related to Municipal Engineering. It is also available to receive feedback and comments from MEA members. There are two main sections; one to discuss the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process and the other to discuss all things related to Development Engineering. We will be focused on ensuring this discussion forum includes topical and relevant information for Municipal Engineers.

Key challenges for your Board this year include:

**Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA)** – As you may recall, for several years, MEA has been pushing the Ministry to deal with two major issues; the time delays waiting for the Minister to rule on a Part II Order Request (PIIOR) and the new legal interpretation that allows a PIIOR on Schedule A and A+ projects. The Auditor General’s December 2016 report highlighted these problems and a number of other provincial organizations have joined MEA in calling for EA reform. Also, the Ministry is anxious to incorporate specific climate change provisions into the EA process so we hope 2017 will be the year we finally see action.

**Ontario Provincial Standards (OPS)** – The OPS is a cornerstone of the MEA that serves a continuing critical role in municipal infrastructure projects. This coming year, with help from our recently hired Infrastructure Services Manager, Hilda Esedebe, MEA will be working to promote the OPS throughout the province.
**Organizational Sustainability** – MEA has a great core of hard working volunteers and currently has substantial financial reserves thanks to prudent budgeting and expenditures. However, the cost of operations has been increasing and each year we all age (whether we admit it or not). The Board recognizes this issue and has formed a Young Professional’s Committee tasked with ensuring the MEA remains relevant and provides value to younger Municipal Engineers – after all, this is our future. Also, the Board will be developing a plan to ensure long term financial sustainability of the organization.

The Board encourages member’s participation and feedback. Please make contact through our Executive Director, Alan Korrell at alan.korell@municipalengineers.on.ca with any questions or feedback. And mark your calendars early for the Annual Workshop in Brampton in November 2017. I’m sure Brampton will excel and deliver another outstanding workshop.

To close, on behalf of the 2016 – 2017 Board; Reg Russwurm (Past President), John Thompson (Vice-President), Salim Alibhai (Treasurer) and the Directors; Steve Lund, Roslyn Lust, Conal Cosgrove, Gary Moore, Matthew Miedema, and Christine Adams, thank you for your support.

Paul Knowles, P.Eng.

President MEA, 2016 - 2017