



**Notes from the AMCTO Zone Executive Roundtable Event  
June 11<sup>th</sup> 2017  
Deerhurst Resort – Huntsville, ON**

**Welcome by AMCTO Vice-President & Roundtable Introductions**

Y. Robert welcomed everyone to the session and noted how good it was to see the level of interest in this event. Roundtable introductions then followed.

**Welcome Remarks from AMCTO President**

S. Palmateer extended thanks to all the Zone Executive members for their commitment to the Association. As a past Zone Executive member and Zone Chair, he noted that participating on the Zone Executive can be a significant time commitment and commented on how the Association appreciated this dedication.

**Facilitated Group Discussion on Successes & Challenges**

Note that items appearing in ***bold italics*** reflect specific recommendations or calls for action that should be considered by individual Zone Executives or AMCTO as an organization.

**i. Zone Member Engagement**

- Some Zones noted that they are challenged to engage members from the larger urban centres who don't see the value in attending Zone events. It was noted that these larger centres have their own in-house training programs so don't need to turn to the Zone to organize them.
- ***Suggestion that the Zones issue a specific invitation to some individuals from larger urban centres to attend the Zone meeting or otherwise get involved at the Zone level.***
- Other Zones noted they have a similar challenge with very small municipalities where staff find it very difficult to get away from the office to attend Zone events.
- One Zone utilizes Survey Monkey to reach out to entire Zone to determine topics of interest so that they can gear Zone meetings appropriately. Note though that there are challenges in finding appropriate finance topics which don't duplicate what MFOA is already doing.
- ***Suggestion that MFOA be approached to try and tag their training events alongside Zone meetings to broaden Zone appeal. Maybe entice them through cross-promotion of events.***
- Several noted that linking Zone events to AMCTO training events helps members justify attendance.



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- ***Suggestion that linking Zone meeting to AMCTO training that focuses on management/leadership would help make them a draw for all segments of membership.***
- Noted that Clerks segment of membership have few other options for training so Zone meetings tend to emphasize Clerk-oriented topics more heavily. Recognize that this might be problematic in terms of broader appeal and attendance.

**ii. Zone Executive Recruitment & Succession Planning**

- Several Zones emphasized the importance they place on engaging younger municipal staff and new AMCTO members and encouraging them to attend Zone meetings as a first step towards getting involved.
- It was noted that engaging new professionals/younger member also often requires engaging their supervisor/manager/director to emphasize the value of letting them attend the Zone events.
- ***Question raised if AMCTO could develop a promotion piece that would help members explain why Zone meetings and other AMCTO related events are an important municipal investment.***
- Some Zones noted they place a huge emphasis on making new attendees feel welcome so that they do not feel like the Zone is a clique environment.
- ***Suggestion was made for Zones to look at possible summer networking opportunities that would permit summer students to attend. These individuals often become full-time employees later and would benefit from early exposure to AMCTO and the Zone.***
- A few of the Zones noted that the current Zone Executive is tasked with networking and recruiting people to serve on the Zone Executive. Local Clerk/Treasurer meetings at the upper tier level are used as one of the opportunities to talk about Zone Executive opportunities that are coming up.
- Northern Zones noted that the Zone level is the only networking opportunity that exists for them since they don't have an upper-tier environment to bring people together.
- ***It was suggested that having more Director positions available on the Executive creates more opportunities for people to get involved but also makes joining the Zone Executive less intimidating because there is more time to become familiar with the Executive without having to take on too many specific responsibilities.***
- ***Suggestion made to look at the development of an "Internship" Program that would give individuals a chance to get involved on the Zone Executive.***

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***Perhaps this could be part of a larger Zone Executive Recruitment Strategy to be developed collectively by some interested volunteers from the current Zone Executives.***

**iii. Revenue Generating Opportunities**

- Most Zones acknowledged that they have substantial surplus funds on hand because they have been quite successful in generating revenues particularly from sponsors while controlling costs related to the Zone meetings.
- Challenge faced by Zones pertains to how to give these surplus funds back to the Zone membership.
- ***Options to be considered, based on initiatives undertaken by some Zones, included providing free conference registrations to one or more individuals; donating to a local charity or to the AMCTO conference charity on behalf of speakers; subsidizing the cost for Zone member participation in an AMCTO training event; when a meeting keynote speaker has publications available for sale, purchasing sufficient copies to give to all Zone meeting attendees.***

**iv. Meeting Planning Practices/Procedures**

- Some Zones noted that members seem to like it when Zone business is conducted first thing in the morning and then the rest of the day is devoted to training topics.
- Some noted that use of the communication e-mail feature available through the AMCTO Zone page websites helps to remind members of upcoming Zone events.
- ***It was noted that it would be helpful for the Zone Executive members to receive a reminder about the specific roles and responsibilities for the various Zone Executive members.***
- ***Suggestion that Zone Executives send any formal policies/procedures to AMCTO to be compiled into a quick handbook that can be shared amongst all Zones.***

**v. Other Hot Topics**

- Social Media - Some discussion about the use of Social Media at the Zone level (e.g. Zone 2 has developed a Facebook page that is used to promote some Zone events)



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- Zone Collaboration – Noted that collaboration amongst Zones in areas such as hosting joint Zone meetings can be quite successful. Also important to share ideas about good speakers, interesting topics, revenue opportunities etc.

**Wrap Up Remarks from AMCTO Vice-President**

Y. Robert thanked everyone for their active participation and for their contributions to the success of the event.

In response to an inquiry, there was a general group consensus that this type of Zone Executive event should be held on an annual basis in conjunction with the annual conference.