

## Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency

### City/Commercial Advisory Committees

Meeting Minutes for March 23, 2022

DoubleTree Hotel – Swift Current Room 1975 Broad Street, Regina; or

Virtual Meeting Microsoft Teams

#### Commercial Advisory Committee

##### Members Present:

Richard Marleau, SAMA Board Member  
Jim Angus (non-voting), SAMA Board Member  
Myron Knafelc (ex officio), SAMA Board Chair  
Noel Geremia, Saskatchewan REALTORS® Association  
Ed Bobiash, Saskatchewan REALTORS® Association  
Darren Bird, Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce  
Ian Magdiak, Canadian Property Tax Association  
Cameron Johnson, National Golf Course Owners Association, Saskatchewan Chapter  
Reg Hinz, Western Grain Elevator Association Tax Committee  
Kirk Wasyluk, TC Energy  
Mark Pinney, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers  
Darwin Collins, Saskatchewan Mining Association  
Corinne Li, Railway Association of Canada  
Rebecca Schultz, Saskatchewan Assessment Appraisers' Association  
Grace Muzyka, Saskatchewan Association of the Appraisal Institute of Canada  
Ken Patsula, Public Works and Government Services Canada

##### Members Absent:

Audrey Trombley – Committee Chair, SAMA Board member  
Randy Goulden, SAMA Board Member, Urban Sector  
Anna Gardikiotis, Regional Downtown Business Improvement District  
Vacant, Regina & District Chamber of Commerce  
Vacant, Canadian Federation of Independent Business  
Wendy Kopeck, Building Owners and Managers Association  
Jim Bence, Saskatchewan Hotel & Hospitality Association  
Monty Reich, Inland Terminal Association of Canada

#### City Advisory Committee

##### Members Present:

Dawn Lunning, Committee Chair, SAMA Board Member  
Myron Knafelc (ex officio), SAMA Board Chair  
John Wagner, (voting), SAMA Board Member  
Jim Puffalt, City of Moose Jaw  
Vanessa Vaughan, City of Prince Albert  
Steve Ward, City of Regina  
Bev Dubois, City of Saskatoon  
Michael Kehler, City of Swift Current  
Al Bridal, City of Swift Current  
Rebecca Schultz, Saskatchewan Assessment Appraisers' Association

##### Members Absent:

Clive Tolley, City of Moose Jaw  
Greg Dionne, City of Prince Albert  
Jason Mancinelli, City of Regina  
Darren Hill, City of Saskatoon  
Vacant, Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association  
Suzanne Zwarych, Saskatchewan School Boards Association

##### Observers Present:

Abayomi Akintola, Ministry of Government Relations  
Chad Boyko, Saskatchewan Municipal Board  
Amy McInnis, Tourism Saskatchewan  
Steve Ward, City of Regina  
Bryce Trew, City of Saskatoon  
Vanessa Vaughan, City of Prince Albert  
Michael Kehler, City of Swift Current  
Alicia Bay, Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities  
Betty Rogers, SAMA CEO

##### Observers Absent:

Kareen Holtby, Ministry of Trade and Export Development  
Suzanne Clark, Public Works and Government Services Canada  
Sian Pascoe, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers  
Brenda Hendrickson, City of Moose Jaw

##### Guests Present:

Samantha Krahn, Saskatchewan Realtors Association  
Dennis Lowe, Ministry of Trade and Export Development

##### Guests Absent:

Marilyn Braun-Pollon, Canadian Federation of Independent Business  
Evan Wilson, Canadian Renewable Energy Association

##### Administration Present:

Darwin Kanius, Committee Secretary, SAMA  
Todd Treslan, SAMA ASD  
Karlo Simonson, SAMA QAD  
Andrew Workman, SAMA TS&P

##### Observers Present:

Crystal Froese, Saskatchewan School Boards Association, Trustee  
Bryce Trew, City of Saskatoon  
Dale Braitenbach, City of Prince Albert  
Betty Rogers, CEO, SAMA

##### Observers Absent:

Rod Nasewich, Ministry of Government Relations  
Jean-Mark Nadeau, Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, Administration  
Brenda Hendrickson, City of Moose Jaw  
Deborah Bryden, City of Regina  
Vacant, City of Swift Current

##### Administration Present:

Dallas Pitt, Committee Secretary, SAMA  
Karlo Simonson, SAMA QAD  
Shaun Cooney, SAMA TS&P

##### Administration Absent:

Kevin Groat, SAMA ASD

**Agenda Item:**

**Decision/Resolution:**

1. Call to Order

Dawn Luhnig, Chair of the City Advisory Committee, called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

2. Opening Remarks

Myron Knafelc, SAMA Board Member, welcomed the attendees.

3. Introductions

Dawn Luhnig introduced the SAMA Board Members and attendees who were remotely attending the meeting. In-person attendees introduced themselves to remote attendees.

Dawn Luhnig explained the meeting ground rules.

4. Approval of Meeting Agenda

Dawn Luhnig introduced the agenda.

MOTION by John Wagner, SAMA Board Member, to approve the agenda.

**Carried**

5. Minutes from the Previous Business Meeting held November 17, 2021

MOTION by Jim Angus, SAMA Board Member, that the joint minutes for the November 17, 2021 City and Commercial Advisory Committee's business meeting be adopted as circulated.

**Carried**

6. Business Arising from the Joint Minutes of November 17, 2021

From the previous minutes, there was one Action Item regarding the definition of multi-family residential properties.

SAMA reviewed this item with the Saskatchewan Realtors Association (SRA) following the meeting.

7. SAMA Update

7a. CEO Report

PowerPoint presentation by Betty Rogers, SAMA's CEO.

**Note:** all presentations/reports will be posted to SAMA's website for access to all committee members.

**Comments/Questions**

No comments or questions.

MOTION by Ken Patsula, Public Works and Government Services Canada, to receive the CEO report.

**Carried**

7b. Assessment Services Division Report

SAMA Update: PowerPoint presentation by Todd Treslan, SAMA ASD.

**Comments/Questions**

No comments or questions.

MOTION by Kirk Wasyluk, CEPA, to receive the SAMA ASD report.

**Carried**

City of Saskatoon Update: Verbal presentation by Bryce Trew.

Assessment Roll Update: 2021 preliminary roll has been confirmed. For the 2021 supplemental roll, 10 appeals have been filed and are awaiting 2 appeal decisions.

Appeal Update: 2021 Board of Revision (BOR) appeals have been completed. In total, there were 748 appeals of which 184 were agreements to adjust, 152 withdrawn or dismissed, and 412 had hearings. From those hearing appeals, 210 assessments were upheld by the BOR and 202 were adjusted.

2021 Saskatchewan Municipal Board (SMB) appeals have started to be worked on. 257 appeals have been confirmed by the SMB with an additional 52 that have been issued perfection letters.

2022 BOR appeals have begun to be received on the preliminary roll. There are currently a total of 573 appeals (550 commercial and 23 residential). The commercial appeals are broken down by 523 being on commercial properties, 26 appeals on multi-residential properties and 1 agricultural appeal. The residential appeals are broken down by 14 single family residences and 9 residential condominiums.

The City of Saskatoon has one appeal, for 11 properties, which is outstanding at the Court of Appeal (CoA) dating back to the 2017 Revaluation.

2022 Amends: As a result of some appeal decisions, the City of Saskatoon has been sending out amended notices prior to tax billing on April 15, 2022. It is expected there will be around 2,500 amended notices sent out for office, warehouse, and retail models. These amended notices may resolve some appeal issues brought forward for 2022.

Additionally, there will be amended notices for approximately 900 replotted parcels, 580 new residential properties and 350 commercial properties amended for physical changes.

Staffing: Staff are preparing to come back into the office on April 4, 2022. Based upon staff feedback, the City of Saskatoon has decided to implement a hybrid work from home option, where staff can opt to work from home for two days a week.

There have been two retirements and two resignations that will need their positions filled in 2022.

Other Projects: Reviewing life cycle/upgrade studies for the CIS (tax and utility) and CAMA systems that have been utilized by Saskatoon for over 20 years.

### **Comments/Questions**

No comments or questions.

City of Regina Update: Verbal presentation by Steve Ward.

Staffing: City of Regina employees are now back working in the office. Regina is reviewing the implementation of a work from home policy that will be rolled out in early September of 2022.

Assessment Roll Update: 2022 assessment roll was opened on February 7, 2022. Regina has received numerous inquiries on assessment values from property owners and tax agents.

Appeal Update: For 2022 BOR, there are currently 463 appeals. This is a slight decrease from the 2021 appeal total of 566. All 2022 appeals are awaiting hearing dates at the BOR and most of them are on commercial properties.

Legislated deadline for 2022 BOR appeal decisions is July 7, 2022.

Regina currently has 185 appeals for the 2021 assessment roll at the SMB. Most of these appeals have been scheduled to use written submission or in-person hearings. Case management on these appeals has been productive for clarifying the grounds of appeal.

City of Regina is awaiting CoA decisions for assessment roll years of 2018, 2019 and 2020. Many of these outstanding appeals are related to disclosure issues.

2022 Property Tax Notices: Regina will be mailing out property tax notices on May 1, 2022. The City is expecting an increased number of inquiries related to property tax levies following the mail out.

2025 Revaluation: Preparation for 2025 has begun with send out of information requests to property owners and validating sales that will be utilized for the 2025 Revaluation.

Other Projects: Regina is continuing work on a modernization project for their taxation and assessment computer system (TAS), which began in 2020, that will upgrade the CAMA system from an Oracle based platform to a Microsoft.net program.

This upgrade will also include an enhanced online data portal that will allow for property owners to electronically submit information and allow property information to be updated more frequently.

### **Comments/Questions**

Sask. Chamber of Commerce: If disclosure of information is a common theme within the appeals, is there a common appeal issue? For instance, would providing additional disclosure potentially reduce the number of these appeals?

City of Regina: There is legislation in place that outlines what information should be disclosed. These appeals will provide an opportunity for the CoA to review the legislation and see if Regina has been compliant with the legislation.

However, these appeals have shown that there is an opportunity to review the legislation in the future regarding disclosure.

City of Swift Current: Disclosure is a complicated issue when it involves property assessment because a lot of collected information is to be kept confidential. The information provided during BORs can be more detailed because the information is contained within the private Board Record.

SAMA Administration: SAMA provides all information such as market reports and information to the property owner or tax agent needed to explain their assessment. As indicated by the other ASPs, there is a fine line with providing information that may be confidential to all parties and it can become a legal process.

City of Prince Albert Update: Verbal presentation by Vanessa Vaughan.

Staffing: Prince Albert currently has four of the five appraiser positions filled. The final position will be filled on April 4, 2022.

City of Price Albert staff have remained in the office throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This has been successful with the procedures that have been implemented at City Hall.

Appeal Update: For the 2021 assessment roll, Prince Albert had 54 property appeals to the BOR. Four of these appeals have been taken forward to the SMB.

For 2022, the assessment roll was opened on January 13 and closed on February 14, 2022. Currently, Prince Albert has received 31 appeals for the BOR. The hope is that these appeals are heard by the end of May.

Prince Albert has seen a decrease in call volume compared to 2021. This is likely due to the City providing communication to property owners that appeals are related to the property assessment and not property taxation.

There are some outstanding appeals at the SMB (3 in 2019, 15 in 2020, and 4 in 2021). These outstanding SMB appeals are waiting on the SMB decision following the CoA's remittal of a 2017 appeal.

2025 Revaluation: Sales verification and inspection work are being performed ahead of the 2025 Revaluation. Additionally, Prince Albert will be implementing the income approach for commercial properties in 2025.

### **Comments/Questions**

No comments or questions.

City of Swift Current Update: Verbal presentation by Michael Kehler.

Assessment Roll Update: Since the November Advisory Committee meetings, the preliminary 2021 assessment roll has been confirmed.

Swift Current released supplementary assessments on November 11 and the 2021 supplemental roll closed on December 12, 2021. The supplemental roll will be confirmed in the near future.

For the 2022 assessment roll, Swift Current has reviewed roughly 450 multi-unit residential properties that had more than one unit. Assessment notices will be sent out on March 28, 2022.

Additionally, Swift Current has provided 2022 quality assurance information to SAMA for posting on the SAMA website.

Appeal Update: There were two appeals launched on the 2021 supplement roll, which were updated via agreements to adjust. In total, there were 12 appeals on the 2021 roll with one appeal going to the BOR.

Swift Current is expecting there will be a slight increase in appeals on the 2022 roll.

Other Projects: Starting with the 2022 assessment roll, Swift Current will be sending out new assessment notices that contain more informative and relevant information.

These new notices were created based upon reviewing assessment notices from Regina, Saskatoon, and other jurisdictions in Canada.

### **Comments/Questions**

No comments or questions.

MOTION by Bev Dubois, City of Saskatoon, to receive the verbal ASP reports.

**Carried**

*Coffee Break*

*11:00 am to 11:05 am*

8: Current Developments

8a. Assessment Governance Report

PowerPoint presentation by Shaun Cooney, SAMA TS&P.

### **Comments/Questions**

Public Works and Government Services Canada: Can independent assessors use different manuals (e.g. Marshall & Swift) or are they required to use SAMA Manuals?

SAMA Administration: If it is for assessing regulated properties, SAMA utilizes the regulated Assessment Manual that outlines properties that should be assessed using M&S, unless the potential structure is not

found in M&S. If it cannot be found in M&S, SAMA provides rates in the Manual for these non-standard structures, such as wind turbines.

For market value properties based on the cost approach, assessment service providers are utilizing SAMA's Cost Guide, which also specifies that M&S rates should be used for most commercial properties on the cost approach.

In terms of adjustments, SAMA calculates a Saskatchewan cost factor (SCF). The SCF is a local adjustment that brings the M&S costs in line with the base date in Saskatchewan.

City of Swift Current: In Swift Current, the M&S rates are embedded within the CAMA system. Typically, there would need to be exceptional circumstances to deviate from utilizing the standards that SAMA has previously discussed.

SAMA Administration: SAMA will occasionally assess new property types using trended original costs until a mass appraisal model can be developed. An example of this would be solar farms where these properties are currently trended but a new mass appraisal model is being developed for 2025.

MOTION by Jim Angus, SAMA Board Member, to receive the Assessment Governance report.

**Carried**

8b: Provincial Assessment System Review by International Property Institute (IPTI)

PowerPoint presentation by Shaun Cooney, SAMA TS&P.

#### **Comments/Questions**

City of Regina: Regina has received a draft copy of the IPTI report from being a member of the IPTI review sub-committee.

Regina has provided some feedback to IPTI for their consideration. Once the report is finalized, it is expected that it will be sent out to all stakeholders.

Ministry of Government Relations: IPTI conducted interviews with some government officials during January. The Ministry is interested to see the final recommendations from IPTI.

Is there an expected time frame for when the report will be completed?

City of Regina: Regina has not received an official completion date from IPTI. However, it is tentatively expected the report will be finalized within the next two to four weeks.

SAMA Administration: SAMA is also looking forward to receiving the report in order to begin any potential work that may come from the recommendations made by IPTI.

For stakeholders, it is important to note, any potential changes to the assessment system from the IPTI review would not be implemented until the revaluation following 2025.

MOTION by Grace Muzyka, Saskatchewan Association of the Appraisal Institute of Canada, to receive the IPTI Review report.

**Carried**

#### 8c: Saskatchewan Municipal Board Update

Verbal presentation by Chad Boyko, Saskatchewan Municipal Board.

General Update: The Assessment Appeals Committee (AAC) had a backlog of appeals entering the 2021 roll year. In order to expediate the process on those prior appeals, the SMB began to utilize written submissions and video conferencing for appeal hearings, which was serendipitous as this occurred ahead of the COVID-19 pandemic. These changes allowed for the majority of the backlog to be completed ahead of the anticipated influx of appeals in the fall of 2021.

For some background information, appeals launched to the AAC are typically regarding property assessments, roughly 80%. Other appeal work at the AAC surrounds planning appeals, (roughly 15%) and municipal boundary appeals.

An additional change, that the AAC has recently implemented, is further utilization of part time members who are experienced in property assessment (e.g. prior assessors, professors, etc.). This has allowed the SMB to leverage these individuals on a cost effective basis and utilize them when they are needed during busy periods of the year.

Appeal Update: The SMB currently has 644 appeals. However, there is the potential for additional appeals from Saskatoon and Moose Jaw. In comparison, at the start of the 2017 Revaluation, the SMB had 517 appeals. The increase in appeal volume was expected, but these appeals are increasingly getting more litigious. The SMB has provided decisions on 114 of these current appeals.

From the current number of appeals, 582 appeals are from the cities, predominately Regina and Saskatoon, 33 are from towns, 26 are from rural municipalities, 5 are from villages, and 2 from resort villages. Additionally, 638 of those are property valuations appeals, with the remaining 6 being refusal to hears.

For 2022, the SMB is looking to keep moving forward on these appeals efficiently and will be shifting to in-person hearings when they are most efficient.

#### **Comments/Questions**

City of Swift Current: What impact is the SMB expecting from the implementation of the BOR changes by the Ministry of Government Relations?



Saskatchewan Municipal Board: The long term hope is that the BOR changes help to increase the quality of decisions that are rendered by the BORs in the province. This would help streamline appeal work for the SMB.

However, those benefits should not be expected immediately upon the implementation of the new BOR system.

SAMA Administration: SAMA appreciates the changes that the SMB have made and we have seen recent improvements in the process.

SAMA Board Member: Does the SMB have a breakdown of commercial versus residential appeals?

Saskatchewan Municipal Board: The SMB can provide a breakdown of commercial versus residential appeals following the Advisory Committee meeting.

MOTION by John Wagner, SAMA Board Member, to receive the SMB Update report.

**Carried**

8d: Precedent Setting Assessment Appeals Update

PowerPoint presentation by Darwin Kanius, SAMA TS&P

The Court of Appeal and Court of Queen's Bench appeal decisions in the presentation can be reviewed at [www.canlii.org/en/sk/](http://www.canlii.org/en/sk/).

**Comments/Questions**

No comments or questions.

MOTION by Bev Dubois, City of Saskatoon, to receive the Assessment Appeals Update report.

**Carried**

*Lunch Break*

*12:04 pm to 12:45 pm*

9: Future Developments

9a: 2025 Revaluation Preparations – Publications and Policy Considerations

PowerPoint presentations by Andrew Workman, SAMA TS&P

**Comments/Questions**

No comments or questions.

(i) Arable Land Model Review Update

**Comments/Questions**

No comments or questions.

(ii) Oil and Gas Well Model Recommendations

**Comments/Questions**

SAMA Administration: Regarding the oil and gas land appeal issue. As per legislation and the Manual, SAMA is correctly assessing the land. To address the equity concerns that have emerged, SAMA has considered that a Manual amendment may be required.

SAMA wants to get out ahead of these concerns and generate feedback from all stakeholders to determine a reasonable solution.

Saskatchewan Realtors Association: *The Municipalities Act* does allow for a tenant to be named as the assessed person.

(iii) Pipeline Model Review

**Comments/Questions**

Canadian Property Tax Association: The CPTA would like to thank SAMA for the opportunity to consult on the pipeline model. However, the pipeline industry continues to have concerns on the depreciation side of the model. This includes physical depreciation and the volume adjustment factor.

The CPTA is looking forward to additional discussions with SAMA on these areas.

SAMA Administration: Thank you for the comments. SAMA is planning to hold additional meeting(s) with the pipeline industry to further review these depreciation components of the pipeline model.

(iv) Solar Farm Model Consultations

**Comments/Questions**

No comments or questions.

MOTION by Jim Angus, SAMA Board Member, to receive the 2025 Revaluation Preparations report.

**Carried**

10. Government Relations Update

PowerPoint presentation by Akintola Abayomi, Government Relations.

The Ministry of Government Relations has been working on the Board of Revision (BOR) initiative for the last couple of years. The program has been developed through collaboration with stakeholders such as SUMA, SARM, Government Relations, etc.

There are four major components to the training initiative:

1. To have a provincial registrar office to ensure that BORs across the province have the required training and knowledge,
2. To establish standard training for all BOR members, secretaries, and chairs in Saskatchewan,
3. To establish a centralized BOR that municipalities can utilize if they cannot establish their own BOR, and

4. To establish an oversight body that will monitor the system regarding performance, efficiency, effectiveness and to make recommendations to the Ministry of Government Relations.

The first two components have been implemented with the final two components to likely be implemented in 2023.

**Comments/Questions**

SAMA Board Member: What is the timeline for the provincially established BOR?

Ministry of Government Relations: The provincial BOR is expected to be operational in January 2023.

MOTION by John Wagner, SAMA Board Member, to receive the Government Relations Update report.

**Carried**

11. Other Business

- a. SAMA 2022 Annual Meeting and Resolutions  
The SAMA Annual Meeting this year is scheduled for April 21 and will be held in Saskatoon. All Advisory Committee members are invited to the Annual meeting if they would like to attend. Registration forms are available on SAMA's website.

No resolutions were identified by Advisory Committee members.

- b. Next City & Commercial Advisory Committee Meeting  
The next City and Commercial Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for November 30, 2022.

MOTION by Al Bridal, City of Swift Current, to adjourn the meeting at 1:42 pm.

**Carried**



Darwin Kanius  
Commercial Advisory Committee, Secretary



Dallas Pitt  
City Advisory Committee, Secretary