



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. Warren Steinley, Chair
Regina Walsh Acres

Mr. Buckley Belanger, Deputy Chair
Athabasca

Mr. Wayne Elhard
Cypress Hills

Mr. Glen Hart
Last Mountain-Touchwood

Mr. Roger Parent
Saskatoon Meewasin

Mr. Corey Tochor
Saskatoon Eastview

Mr. Randy Weekes
Biggar

[The committee met at 11:30.]

The Chair: — Welcome, everyone. Good morning. We are going to get on the way with the business at hand. We're going to first of all introduce the members of the committee. We have Mr. Glen Hart, Mr. Corey Tochor, Mr. Randy Weekes, Mr. Wayne Elhard, and Mr. Roger Parent from the government side; and Mr. Belanger from the opposition.

Bill No. 904 — *The Mohyla Institute (1958) Amendment Act, 2014*

The Chair: — I advise the committee that the business before the committee is Bill No. 904, *The Mohyla Institute (1958) Amendment Act, 2014*. We will now consider clause 1, short title for Bill No. 904. The committee will welcome Mr. Makowsky who is the sponsor of this bill. And, Mr. Makowsky, I ask you to introduce the guests from the Mohyla Institute.

Clause 1

Mr. Makowsky: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Thank you, committee members. To my right is Mr. Gerald Luciuk, and to my left is Mr. Steve Senyk. They are members of the board of directors of the Mohyla Institute that is located in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. And we're here to consider, as you mentioned, some wording changes that these gentlemen and their board would like to see happen, from their founding documents.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Mr. Makowsky. Welcome, Mr. Luciuk and Mr. Senyk. Thank you very much for being able to be here today. We'll explain the process to committee members. First we'll have the Law Clerk, Mr. Ring, present his report on the bill to the committee. Then I'll ask Mr. Makowsky and the other witnesses to make comments and answer any questions the committee members may have. Then we'll proceed to clause-by-clause consideration of this bill. Mr. Ring.

Mr. Ring: — Committee members, Mr. Chair, I've examined this private bill and I'm pleased to report that it is drawn in accordance with the rules of the Legislative Assembly respecting private bills. I am also pleased to report that in my opinion it contains no provisions that are at variance with the usual provisions of private Acts on similar subjects or that are deserving of special attention. Thank you very much.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Ring. We'll table that report. Next we'd like to hear any comments or concerns. Any questions from the members on the bill? On the report?

Mr. Belanger: — Yes. If I could ask just in terms of, for my own purposes and sake, what exactly does the Mohyla Institute actually do?

Mr. Senyk: — We have a long history. The Mohyla Institute was first established in 1916, and we'll be celebrating our 100th anniversary next year. It's a student residence for people coming to study at the University of Saskatchewan.

When it was first established back in 1916, many of the

students who resided there were attending high school because not all rural areas had high schools at the time, and so they were brought in, lived in residence. Eventually it became solely a place for students attending post-secondary education, whether it be the University of Saskatchewan, SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology], or one of the other vocational schools in the city.

Mr. Belanger: — And is it a series of apartment buildings, or is it just one student residence?

Mr. Senyk: — No, it's a three-storey building. When the place got started, it was in a house on Lansdowne Avenue, and I'm not sure if it's still standing there or not. But currently the current facility that we have was moved into as a brand new building in 1965.

Mr. Belanger: — How many students does it house? And again I'm just doing this for my own reasons.

Mr. Senyk: — The capacity, some of the rooms when the building was built initially, they had double rooms and singles. I think with changes of tastes and expectations, a lot of students want to have single rooms, so we rent out what used to be a double at a more premium rate than a single, smaller single room. But capacity is around 58, and it varies from year to year how many students we have.

In the summer months, we usually have different groups coming through to reside there. It would vary. I think we used to have football teams live there in the summer while they were training in camp. Last year we had a group of engineering students from India who resided there for a couple of months — or I shouldn't say a couple of months; I think it was six weeks — agriculture students from China, and a French immersion group that's coming back again this year. Traditionally we've had summer school programs as well for students coming there to learn Ukrainian language for high school credit, music, and cultural programs.

It's a non-profit organization run by an elected board. In 2011 the Government of Canada recognized the Mohyla Institute as a national historic event for its contribution to Canada, if you like, in social development.

Mr. Belanger: — The reason why I'm asking all these questions is that as a northern MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], we have the same issues with many students travelling to the city for post-secondary studies, and we always look at models and ways that other people are doing their part to try and accommodate some of the housing needs. As you know, Saskatoon is growing very well and we applaud that, but when you have growth, you have increased pressures for rent and so on and so forth. So a lot of our students struggle, and that's one of the reasons why I'm so interested in what your institute does because it gives us examples on what we could possibly do for our students.

When you say you have a wide variety of students staying there, it's not specific to one particular group of people. Or is there any rules around that?

Mr. Senyk: — When the institute was first established, it served primarily students of Ukrainian families, and then over time it's changed. We've accommodated others, and I think it's been working well. This year it looks like a little bit of a United Nations there.

Mr. Belanger: — And with the financing, how do you finance your operations? Is it primarily through rent, or is it over a period of fundraising or a combination of both?

Mr. Senyk: — A combination. Yes. We pray often that we don't have a lot of repairs to make, but we appeal to donors. Like this year we've had to make some renovations to the kitchens in the order of \$60,000, new ventilation to meet codes. One of the things, one of the aims of the board is to ensure that we've got an institution that is safe, provides safe housing for the students who reside there, and that things are up to code.

Mr. Belanger: — The final question I have is in relation to . . . Well first of all, congratulations on your 100th year, and congratulations on many families and different groups that you've helped over the years. I think it's very impressive. And congratulations as well in terms of expanding your role and helping many other different nationalities or people of different origin.

Mr. Senyk: — Thank you.

Mr. Belanger: — I guess the other final question I'll have, based on the changes that are here in the bill, you're basically indicating that while your service now is wider ranging, sources of revenues in terms of fundraising would also be wider ranging, and that's the purposes of the changes of the bill today. Is that correct? Am I safe to assume that?

Mr. Senyk: — In terms of fundraising?

Mr. Belanger: — Yes.

Mr. Senyk: — I think our main source of donations still comes from the Ukrainian community in Saskatchewan and, in some cases, across Canada but primarily from Saskatchewan.

Mr. Belanger: — I know some of these questions may be very basic to you, but it's really a good opportunity to gain some of the information. Because I remember a colleague of mine one time was appointed provincial secretary, and he indicated that he was the keeper of the royal seal. The next question he asked is, where is the darn thing? So sometimes these silly questions, you know, they serve a purpose for educating many of us. So thanks again.

Mr. Senyk: — You're very welcome. I think I might just like to add that we've had a lot of illustrious people who lived at Mohyla over the years. Sylvia Fedoruk, the honourable Sylvia Fedoruk who was Lieutenant Governor, she was a resident. The current Deputy Premier of the province, Ken Krawetz, is an alumnus of Mohyla, and the story goes on. Gerry Luciuk over here, my associate, he's a graduate and a former alumnus, long-time board member. So we've had a lot of different people reside there over the years and distinguish themselves. We try to just make it a good place for students to live.

The Chair: — Okay. Thank you very much. Any other questions? Mr. Weekes.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for that. I'd just like you to explain a bit more the need for the amendment and what you're getting now as an organization that you couldn't do before, that type of information, please.

Mr. Senyk: — Okay. Just before I answer that question, in case any of you are curious about my eyes, I'm not high on drugs. I just came out of the eye centre today. I had an injection in one eye and they dilated both, so in some cases you're looking, a few of you are looking blurred. I'm sure you're not, but that's my eyes.

Okay. You're asking about the main reason for changing this. Well I think our feeling was that the way it read, the original wording, it was pretty restrictive. And we'd like to just make it less so in terms of should . . . In the eventuality that the place might have to wind down, rather than having it restricted to the church as it reads right now, we would like to have some flexibility to it so that in whatever year that might happen — hopefully never, but you know things do come to an end sometimes — that we decide on where the assets might go at that time. Who knows what the conditions might be but I guess make it a little more forward looking in some ways.

Mr. Luciuk: — Just to elaborate upon that, of course the direction for that comes from our membership through an annual general meeting and the elected board that we have.

Now the Act of incorporation of course happened in 1958, just prior to the new building being constructed. I think at that time, sort of the vision was who would benefit most from these assets, and it is a significant asset owned by the membership in Mohyla Institute. And at that time perhaps there were fewer places that you could manage those assets in terms of a winding-down provision which all corporations have to have.

At that time, I don't think there was a Shevchenko Foundation, which is a major Canadian-Ukrainian foundation. There's a Ukrainian Self-Reliance League foundation that could also benefit from that. So there are other places that the assets could be strategically managed, and the flexibility provided for that in the current Act of incorporation.

I think the membership — and wisely so — was quite direct about that in saying we need to broaden the decisions that we could take in the future winding down, should that come. And there is no intention at the present time to wind the corporation down.

The Chair: — Thank you. Mr. Elhard.

Mr. Elhard: — Just briefly, the wording here does not indicate a withdrawal of support by the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church. It really is to accommodate a broader basis of support from other interested parties or organizations. Is that right?

Mr. Luciuk: — Exactly. We certainly are not at odds with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada. In fact we depend very much on their participation and their membership continuing to participate in the services of the Mohyla Institute. But it allows

us to . . . And in fact right now as it stands, direction to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada might be again restricted because they too have a foundation of their own to which we might want to direct proceeds upon winding down. Again, flexibility is the key.

Mr. Elhard: — So can I assume that by broadening the definition of sponsorship or support that you've been reasonably successful in achieving that level of broadened support. Or is this to start a whole new chapter of fundraising initiatives?

Mr. Luciuk: — Fundraising's always a challenge. I think we're always striving to broaden it. Obviously the community is much more diverse, both the Ukrainian community within itself as well as without.

So I don't think the issue of the changes to the Act are necessarily to broaden the membership. We have every opportunity to do that. It's just to provide us the flexibility in terms of winding down and the need to have accurate and rigorous provisions for that.

The Chair: — Mr. Hart.

[11:45]

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think you answered my question. I thought that the intention of the amendment is, in the event that your organization would cease its operation, to deal with the wind-down, and then in some of the other discussions, it seemed to maybe get off track a little bit. So just to be clear, this is in the event that your organization ceases to operate that this amendment would broaden the base as far as the disposal of the assets.

Mr. Luciuk: — And it's not necessarily the disposal because it's an asset, and it could be used in a different way as the flexibility allows us to use those. Our mission statement is guaranteeing our future through youth, and we could continue to maintain that through the foundation, through a different sort of approach to student housing, whatever. But it's that flexibility we're seeking in the Act of incorporation.

Mr. Hart: — Well I'd like to congratulate you in your forward thinking. I think it's our experience, and perhaps the Law Clerk can comment on that, there are a number of organizations over the years that have legislation, that were incorporated by an Act of the legislature and ceased to exist, and there was no provision to deal with that when they no longer exist. And so to see organizations be proactive and say, look, you know, in the eventuality that we decide that we're no longer going to operate, we are providing for the proper . . . Our Act is constituted in such a way that we can easily manage our assets and so on. So congratulations.

I'm sure you will continue to operate for a long time. I'm guessing that there's a high demand for the spaces in your residence. As the member opposite mentioned, you know, it's very . . . Students finding spaces to live during the winter is difficult and expensive. And I think you, over the years, have been providing an excellent service to the student body in Saskatoon. So thank you for that.

The Chair: — Thank you very much. Is there any other questions? Seeing none, we will begin the clause-by-clause consideration. Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.]

[Preamble agreed to.]

The Chair: — Carried. Therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: *The Mohyla Institute (1958) Amendment Act, 2014*.

I'll have a member move the following motion:

That the committee report Bill No. 904, *The Mohyla Institute (1958) Amendment Act, 2014* without amendment.

Is that agreed?

Mr. Weekes: — I so move.

The Chair: — Mr. Weekes. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — I'll have another member move:

That the fees respecting Bill No. 904, *The Mohyla Institute (1958) Amendment Act, 2014* be waived.

Mr. Elhard: — I so move.

The Chair: — Mr. Elhard. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Thank you very much, Mr. Makowsky, for being the sponsor of this bill. And to the witnesses, thank you very much for coming down to Regina.

I advise the committee that a draft of the sixth report is being distributed. Once they have a chance to review it, I'll have a member move the following motion:

That the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be adopted and presented to the Assembly.

Mr. Tochor. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. That concludes today's agenda. I thank everyone for attending, and I ask for a member to move an adjournment motion.

Mr. Hart: — I'll so move.

The Chair: — Mr. Hart. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Thank you very much. This meeting stands adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 11:50.]