



No. 55

VOTES and PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN

SECOND SESSION – TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Monday, May 8, 2006

1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ABSENCE OF THE SPEAKER

The Clerk advised the Assembly that the Speaker would not be present to open the sitting. Thereupon the Deputy Speaker took the chair.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Petitions of citizens of the Province of Saskatchewan were presented and laid upon the Table by the following Members: Elhard, Draude, Hermanson, Stewart, Harpauer, Eagles, Weekes, Cheveldayoff, Allchurch, Kirsch, Brkich, Merriman and Morgan.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

According to Order, the Deputy Clerk having favourably reported on the same pursuant to Rule 14(7), the following Petition was read and received:

Of citizens of the Province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government to take the necessary action to ensure that surgical services are re-instated in the Tisdale Hospital.

(Sessional Paper No. 742)

Of citizens of the Province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government to ensure that the Biggar Hospital, Long-term Care Home and Ambulance services, maintain, at the very least, their current level of services.

(Addendum to Sessional Paper No. 5)

Of citizens of the Province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government to take the necessary action to implement an allocation of financial resources to build an elementary school in Arbor Creek.

(Addendum to Sessional Paper No. 27)

Of citizens of the Province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway 32 in order to address safety and economic concerns.

(Addendum to Sessional Paper No. 64)

Of citizens of the Province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Dept. of Highways section shop in Watrous remain open so as to ensure the safety of all motorists and Sask. Highways employees.

(Addendum to Sessional Paper No. 67)

Of citizens of the Province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government to act upon the recommendations made by the group "Saskatchewan Families for Effective Autism Treatment".

(Addendum to Sessional Paper No. 638)

Of citizens of the Province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

(Addendum to Sessional Paper No. 639)

Of citizens of the Province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government to take the steps to resurface and maintain Highway 3 from Fairholme to Turtleford.

(Addendum to Sessional Paper No. 669)

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Order of the Day being called for Question Nos. 1086 and 1094, they were answered. (See Appendix)

On motion of the Hon. Mr. Hagel:

Ordered, That this Assembly do now adjourn.

The Assembly adjourned at 2:23 p.m. until Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. in order to receive Her Excellency Rt. Hon. Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada.

Hon. P. Myron Kowalsky
Speaker

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mr. Wall asked the Government the following Question No. 1086, which was answered by the Hon. Ms. Higgins:

To the Minister of Learning: Can the Minister indicate: (1) How much money has been provided to the Holy Trinity Roman Catholic School Division for air quality upgrades over the past year? (2) What actions the school division has taken/will be taking with funding provided by the Department to improve air quality? (3) How much of the funding is new (as of this calendar year)?

Answer:

- (1) The department is funding \$248,000 of a total of \$350,000.
- (2) The school division commissioned consultants to assess the problem, recommend solutions and monitor the air quality. In addition, the consultants developed the design to repair the sewer, plumbing and ventilation systems and replace, patch and clean up the finishes affected by the work. The school division also leased three relocatable classrooms for use by students and staff removed from the school.
- (3) All of the funding provided by the department is from the 2006-07 budget.

Mr. Wall asked the Government the following Question No. 1087, which was answered by the Hon. Ms. Higgins:

To the Minister of Learning: Does the Minister consider any of the airborne fungi mentioned in a report prepared by Dr. Don Figley dated February 21, 2006 (“air sampling for airborne fungi found aspergillus unguis, acremonium strictum, aspergillus versicolor and penicillium griseofolium”) to be hazardous to the health of students and staff at St. Patrick’s School in Swift Current?

Answer:

Please note that the latest study carried out by Dr. Figley was dated February 21, 2005 (source Dr. Figley). If Mr. Wall has a different report, the department would be happy to review and provide comment on that report.

No. The kinds and levels of mould in the school were consistent with and at a significantly lower level than levels found in the outside air. The main issue in this school was found to be a lack of integrity in the plumbing system that resulted in the infiltration of sewer gases into the school. The testing for moulds, asbestos, etc. was carried out to ensure that these concerns were not an issue. There was no evidence to suggest that there were any moulds growing in the school. The mere existence of moulds in air samples does not necessarily constitute a health hazard. There were complaints regarding the health of students and staff which is why the school division contacted and involved the local health authorities and occupational health and safety officials. Both are satisfied that the school is now safe for the students and staff.

Mr. Wall asked the Government the following Question No. 1088, which was answered by the Hon. Ms. Higgins:

To the Minister of Learning: Can the Minister indicate what the \$248,000 announced by the Department of Learning on April 20, 2006 for “air quality upgrades” to St. Patrick’s School in Swift Current will be used for?

Answer:

This is identified above in question 1086.

Mr. Wall asked the Government the following Question No. 1089, which was answered by the Hon. Ms. Higgins:

To the Minister of Learning: Can the Minister indicate how much money the department paid in 2006/07 for repairs and renovation to Saskatchewan schools that have been found to have mould or other problems that can affect the health and safety of students and staff?

Answer:

The department, thus far in 2006-07, has committed to spend approximately \$1.75M for health and safety issues. This is a very high priority for the department.

Mr. Wall asked the Government the following Question No. 1090, which was answered by the Hon. Ms. Higgins:

To the Minister of Learning: Can the Minister indicate how much money the department paid in 2005/06 for repairs and renovation to Saskatchewan schools that have been found to have mould or other problems that can affect the health and safety of students and staff?

Answer:

In 2005-06, the department spent approximately \$1.4M on health and safety issues.

Mr. Wall asked the Government the following Question No. 1091, which was answered by the Hon. Ms. Higgins:

To the Minister of Learning: Is the Minister aware whether any mould or any fungus which could potentially pose a health hazard to students and/or staff was located during the inspection of St. Patrick's School?

Answer:

In October 2004, baseline testing by Dr. Figley indicated that aspergillus/ penicillium spores with a small percentage (2% - 8%) of the spores indicated as toxigenic, pathogenic or atypical fungi species (agrimonium strictum) were detected. Remedial action was taken, and air samples taken in February 2005 (Dr. Figley's February 21, 2005 report). See question 1087 for additional information.

Mr. Wall asked the Government the following Question No. 1092, which was answered by the Hon. Ms. Higgins:

To the Minister of Learning: Now that the repairs of St. Patrick's School in Swift Current have been completed, does the department have a commitment to pay for a total environmental assessment to determine the overall condition of the school, given the lengthy history of air quality complaints at St. Patrick's School and the fact that testing located at least six plumbing leaks in the school?

Answer:

Consultants and health officials have been monitoring the environments prior to, during and after renovations. The results were reviewed by the local medical authority and met the accepted standards. The department is satisfied that all steps have been taken to remedy the situation in St. Patrick's School. The \$248,000 committed by the department is the total amount needed to address this issue. The ventilation and plumbing systems were checked thoroughly and repaired/replaced as necessary.

Mr. Morgan asked the Government the following Question No. 1093, which was answered by the Hon. Mr. Belanger:

To the Minister of Community Resources: Is there any record of the RCMP contacting the Government of Saskatchewan concerning a pardon for Evelyn Hynes at any time that she was an employee of the Government of Saskatchewan?

Answer:

The department is not aware of any record of the RCMP contacting the Government of Saskatchewan concerning a pardon for Evelyn Hynes.

Mr. Morgan asked the Government the following Question No. 1094, which was answered by the Hon. Mr. Belanger:

To the Minister of Community Resources: Can the Minister indicate the date that the Government of Saskatchewan discovered the first instance of fraud by Evelyn Hynes?

Answer:

Senior management became aware of this matter on December 1, 2004, one day after a department employee observed unusual activity on a client file.

NOTICE OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF A BILL

On Wednesday:

Mr. Brkich to move First Reading of Bill No. 206 – The Bio-diesel Fuel Act.

NOTICE OF WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The following Question was given notice on day no. 52 and is to be answered by day no. 57:

Mr. Brkich, to ask the Government the following Question No. 1095:

To the Minister of Agriculture and Food: How many grains and oilseeds producers have contacted Crop Insurance after the March 31 deadline in an effort to reinstate their coverage for 2006?

The following Questions were given notice on day no. 55 and are to be answered by day no. 60:

Mr. Brkich, to ask the Government the following Question No. 1096:

To the Minister of Health: How many communities in rural Saskatchewan are without the services of a full-time resident physician, and which ones?

Mr. Brkich, to ask the Government the following Question No. 1097:

To the Minister of Health: What assistance does the provincial government provide for communities who have lost the services of their resident physician?

Mr. Brkich, to ask the Government the following Question No. 1098:

To the Minister of Health: Does the provincial government offer temporary physician services to communities that have lost their full-time resident physician until a permanent physician can be obtained?

Mr. Brkich, to ask the Government the following Question No. 1099:

To the Minister of Health: Does the provincial government offer a physician recruitment service for communities that have lost the services of a full-time physician?