



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. Denis Allchurch, Chair
Rosthern-Shellbrook

Ms. Judy Junor, Deputy Chair
Saskatoon Eastview

Mr. Tim McMillan
Lloydminster

Ms. Laura Ross
Regina Qu'Appelle Valley

Ms. Joceline Schreimer
Saskatoon Sutherland

Ms. Nadine Wilson
Saskatchewan Rivers

Mr. Trent Wotherspoon
Regina Rosemont

[The committee met at 08:50.]

The Chair: — Well good morning, committee members. Welcome to the Standing Committee on Private Bills. I'll introduce the members that are here today. We have Ms. Schriemer, Ms. Wilson, Ms. Ross, and Mr. Wotherspoon. And I'm the committee Chair, Denis Allchurch.

First order of business for today is the consideration of the report on petitioners' compliance with the rules. The committee clerk, Iris Lang, will now provide a report.

Ms. Lang: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. And good morning, members.

This morning what we're looking at is the actual application for petition for a private Bill and to assess whether it has complied with the rules. We're not looking at the Bill, we're just looking at the petition.

There are really three rules that govern the acceptability of a petition. Rule 91 is the petition is to be filled no later than the fourth sitting day of the spring period, which was March 5, 2009, and presented no later than the eighth sitting day of the spring period, which was March 12, 2009.

Rule 92 describes the deposit requirements of the petitioner, and rule 95 explains the notice for a petition to be advertised in two issues of *The Saskatchewan Gazette* and four consecutive issues of newspapers published in English and having circulation in the locality affected.

With regards to petition no. 902 — and you have copies of my report in front of you — petition 902, the Stephen and Michelene Worobetz Foundation, in the province of Saskatchewan, they're praying for an Act to amend *An Act to Incorporate the Stephen and Michelene Worobetz Foundation*. Rule 91, the filing deadlines, the rules have been fully complied with. Rule 92, the payment of filing fees, have been complied with as well, and the publication notice for the petition have been complied with in that it was advertised in *The Saskatchewan Gazette* June 20, 27, 2008, and the Saskatchewan *StarPhoenix* newspaper June 11, 12, 13, 14, 2008.

With regards to petition 903, the Ancient Order of Melchizedeq, Inc. in the province of Saskatchewan, they're praying for an Act to provide for certain degree-granting status for Hidden Land Institute. And rule 91, the filing deadlines, the rule has been complied with. Rule 92, the payment of filing fees, has been complied with. Rule 95, there was notice given in *The Saskatchewan Gazette* on two occasions: February 23, 2007 and March 2, 2007. It was also advertised in the newspaper, in the *Prince Albert Daily Herald* February 12, 13, 14, 15, 2007.

With respect to petition 903, the committee may wish to consider the length of time that has passed between the presentation of the petition and when it was advertised, and the publication requirement to give notice in the locality affected, given that it's been two years since it was actually advertised and it was advertised in the *Prince Albert Daily Herald*, but I leave that with the committee to make those decisions.

That's my report, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: — Thank you, Iris. Is there any questions from the committee members. I recognize Mr. Wotherspoon.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I don't know the actual rule around this. Is there a rule around the actual time that it must be advertised before a petition comes forward? Is it just our judgment whether or not this two-year period is adequate?

Ms. Lang: — Yes, the rule does not state a time limit. It's up to what the committee would like the practice to be, and if we were to define a practice and a locality definition that would be helpful in a go-forward method.

The Chair: — I recognize Ms. Wilson.

Ms. Wilson: — Just to give you a bit of background, Dr. Regehr, James Regehr started this before the election, and he had an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] to bring it forward. But then the election came and everything was put to a stop. But he had advertised; everything was fulfilled. And then during this time we had to put a stop on it, so he came to me and lobbied to me for it. And so that's why it's here today with that time.

The Chair: — Is there any more questions? Seeing no questions, I'm just wondering, Iris, should we as a committee look at setting out a rule in regards to advertising so that it isn't like this case here where there's a two-year period before it comes to the committee?

Ms. Lang: — Certainly some guidelines would be helpful in the discussion with petitioners coming forward through the Clerk's office or the committees branch. We'd have some direction as to what clearly the guidelines are.

The Chair: — Should we spell out those guidelines now or should we do that in another committee meeting?

Ms. Lang: — I think it can happen . . . It's up to the committee's decision. It can go either way. We can make a decision on this particular item today, and at a later date make a decision of what those guidelines . . . Or perhaps you would like to do that today. It's the committee's decision.

The Chair: — Well maybe what we'll do, we'll . . . Yes, Ms. Ross.

Ms. Ross: — I'd like to make a comment. I think that it would be really important for us to be able to study and look at what past practices have been, what is the usual time length that it takes to bring something forward — things like that. I would not be comfortable just making a decision without looking at the timelines that have passed for . . . has taken previous petitions to come forward. So in order for us to make a well-informed decision, we need more information than just guesswork.

The Chair: — Thank you. Mr. Wotherspoon.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Yes, I would certainly support that as

well, that we do a little bit of research, I guess, and look back to what past practice has been and what an adequate amount of time would be. And maybe we'd discuss the merits of that.

[The committee adjourned at 09:05.]

And then, I guess, here today, since we're not discussing the actual merits of this private member's Bill, maybe we cast our judgment whether or not we will move forward with accepting this to move forward and without . . . You know, if there hasn't been clearly defined rules in the past, maybe we want to, you know, consider having this Bill move forward at this point for all the considerations that will occur as we go forward.

The Chair: — Okay. Thank you, Mr. Wotherspoon. Is that the agreement of the committee to deal with the petition first of all? And then we'll deal with, I guess, regulations after then.

In regards then to the Bill, is there any more questions? Seeing none, I need somebody to move:

That the report on the petitions compliance with rules for petitions 902 and 903 be accepted.

Ms. Wilson: — I so move.

The Chair: — All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Actually I got ahead of myself with the motion. I will read the motion. Moved by Ms. Wilson:

That the report on petitioners' compliance with the rules for petitions 902 and 903 be accepted.

All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Now I'm looking for somebody to move:

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

Ms. Ross: — I so move.

The Chair: — Thank you, Ms. Ross. Moved by Ms. Ross:

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

All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

I guess that ends our committee for this morning. Thank you, members, for coming early in the morning to deal with the work at hand.

I look forward to a motion of adjournment. Mr. Wotherspoon. Thank you.