

8:35

[Ms Graham in the chair]

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I'll now call to order this regular meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills. If you would have regard to your agenda, which was circulated previously, I would entertain a motion.

MR. STRANG: I move, Madam Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: You're moving, Mr. Strang, approval of the agenda I presume.

MR. STRANG: Correct.

THE CHAIRMAN: All in favour, please say aye. Opposed, please say no. That motion is carried.

You also have circulated to you the minutes of the March 30, 1999, meeting. I would entertain a motion approving those minutes as circulated.

MR. LANGEVIN: Madam Chairman, I'll move the approval of the minutes as circulated.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Langevin. All in favour, please say aye. All opposed, please say no. The motion is carried.

As you are aware, our primary business today is to consider, deliberate, and decide on Bill Pr. 1 and Bill Pr. 3. I would like to put on the record the fact that Mr. Don Tannas of Highwood has absented himself from the meeting today due to a potential conflict of interest with respect to both of the bills.

I would just remind members that as both of these bills deal with the incorporation of an insurance company, as has been mentioned before, the role of the committee is the first step in the establishment of an insurance company in Alberta as the law stands now; that is, to ensure that the company is incorporated in accordance with the requirements of the Insurance Act and is incorporated by special act.

Stage 2 involves the issuance of a licence by the superintendent of insurance, and there are various requirements in sections 25 to 48 of the Insurance Act which the superintendent must satisfy himself of before issuing a licence.

That being said, would there be a desire to make a motion with respect to Bill Pr. 1?

MR. THURBER: Madam Chairman, thank you. In light of the discussions we had with Pr. 1, I would like to make the following motion. I would move that the Standing Committee on Private Bills recommend to the Legislative Assembly that Bill Pr. 1, the National Bond Insurance Corporation Act, proceed with the following amendment, by striking out section 5 and substituting the following:

The corporation shall not commence business until

- (a) the amount of capital stock required by section 34 of the Insurance Act has been fully subscribed and paid, and
- (b) the corporation has obtained a license under the Insurance Act.

We had some discussion on that last time, and I think those two items will safeguard the follow-up on Pr. 1.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Thurber. Of course that was an amendment that was recommended by the superintendent of insurance. Thanks for that motion.

Is there any discussion by members? Ms Dean, you'd like to advise the committee?

MS DEAN: I just wanted to follow up on one matter that was raised during the hearing on this bill. It was raised by Mrs. Sloan. She had

asked that Mr. Rodrigues, the superintendent of insurance, provide the committee with any additional information that may come to light at his office with respect to this particular insurance company. I would like to advise the committee that as of yesterday there was no new information.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for that. Were there any questions or concerns?

All in favour of the motion as put by Mr. Thurber? All opposed? The motion is carried.

Moving on to Bill Pr. 3.

MR. LANGEVIN: Madam Chairman, I'd like to move that the Standing Committee on Private Bills recommend to the Legislative Assembly that Bill Pr. 3, Consumers Insurance Company Act, proceed with the following amendment:

The company shall not commence business until

- (a) the amount of capital stock required by section 34 of the Insurance Act has been fully subscribed and paid, and
- (b) the company has obtained a licence under the Insurance Act.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Langevin. This is the same amendment as was moved in Pr. 1 and again was recommended by the superintendent of insurance.

MR. LANGEVIN: I'd like to make one addition to my motion here. Also under section 4 by striking out subsection (3) and substituting the following, the amendment I just read.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. Thank you very much.

Anything to add, Ms Dean? All right.

Mr. MacDonald.

MR. MacDONALD: Yes, Madam Chairman. This Pr. 3 and the entity that is incorporating, is this going to be the first insurance company that is looking at providing living benefits to people?

THE CHAIRMAN: I'll just have Ms Dean respond to that. I know there was some discussion about that with the hearing.

MS DEAN: There was some discussion with respect to the type of business that this particular insurance company would be involved in. In terms of the specific advertising this company undertook, they're requesting a petition to incorporate a insurance company that will engage in the business of insurance of all classes and kinds except fire insurance. So that's the formal information we have apart from what was discussed at the hearing. Apart from that, that's all my information.

MR. MacDONALD: Okay. I appreciate that, and it's good that we have this on the record. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

THE CHAIRMAN: Right. All in favour of the motion as put by Mr. Langevin, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: All opposed, please say no. The motion is carried.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right then. We'll move on to item 5, Other Business. Under this heading I would like to just bring you up to

date on what has transpired with respect to Bill Pr. 2, which, as you know, is the Shaw Communications Inc. Amendment Act, 1999. On March 30, 1999, the hearing into this matter came before this committee, and as you will recall, the hearing was deferred pending recommendations in writing from Treasury. Treasury, as you will recall, had requested further information from the petitioner in order to allow it to make a recommendation to the committee. I would ask Ms Dean to bring us up to date on what has transpired in that regard.

MS DEAN: Sure. Certainly with the chair's permission, if I could just revert back to the previous question. I do have the advertisement that was placed with respect to Pr. 3, and I would like to read it into the record for the committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: By all means.

MS DEAN:

Notice is hereby given that a petition will be submitted to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Alberta at its next session for the passage of a Bill by Howard Goldford and Randy Hauge to be incorporated as a body corporate under the name "Consumers Insurance Company", to promote, sell and provide insurance coverage to persons in Alberta and elsewhere.

I just wanted to clarify that for the committee.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Mr. MacDonald, you've noted that no doubt?

MS DEAN: I'd just like to brief the committee on my recent discussion with Mr. James Forrest and Ms Carol Patrick of Alberta Treasury. I understand they're still awaiting further information from Shaw Communications and will still require some more time before they're able to provide written comments to the committee on Pr. 2. I'm expecting a letter from them sometime today, but my conversation with Mr. Forrest over the phone yesterday indicated that they will need at least a couple of weeks before they'll be in a position to provide written comment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mrs. Burgener.

MRS. BURGNER: Yes, Madam Chairman. I assume, then, that when the information is made available to us, you would simply schedule another meeting to consider that new information?

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, that's certainly one way of dealing with it. Because Treasury is suggesting that it will need a couple of weeks, maybe we should set a tentative date for, say, three weeks hence.

8:45

MRS. BURGNER: Might we just have some closure to when we're going to look at it and a working time line? Given that we're into April, I would like to ensure that if it's possible to hear this matter in this session, we do our utmost and make ourselves available to the people requesting our input.

THE CHAIRMAN: That's certainly proper consideration. Did you wish to comment on that?

Yes, Mrs. Burgener.

MRS. BURGNER: The thing is that when the counsel feels they have the information that's required, you give notice to the committee. That would be sufficient for my concerns.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. You've made that motion then. Did you have something to say, Mr. Zwozdesky?

MR. ZWOZDESKY: I have a question for clarification. I just want to be assured that all the information that has been requested from Shaw has now made its way through to our various government departments and reviewers. Is that correct? Excuse me, Madam Chairman. That's my understanding from having spoken with some of the parties this morning prior to the meeting. I just wanted to reaffirm that that is the case, that we now have all the information to the questions or queries or clarifications that were required.

THE CHAIRMAN: I'll have Ms Dean respond to that, but I don't believe that's our most recent information.

MS DEAN: The office of Parliamentary Counsel certainly hasn't been provided anything on behalf of the committee with respect to this bill. Again, as I said, I spoke with Mr. Forrest yesterday afternoon, and my understanding from my phone call with him was that they were still awaiting further information from the petitioner and required more time. However, that information may have been provided in the interim.

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Which would suggest they've received some information probably. They're digesting it, and now maybe some additional questions have arisen. Okay.

MS DEAN: Yes. Again, as I said, I'm awaiting a formal letter from Treasury requesting further time to provide their comments to the committee.

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thanks a lot for that information.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Well, it has been suggested that we not fix a return date for the meeting of the committee. I would like to suggest that perhaps we do set a tentative date just so we can all schedule our activities a little easier. I'd like to suggest that perhaps we set it tentatively for Tuesday, May 4. Mr. Thurber, do you want to comment on that?

MR. THURBER: Thanks, Madam Chairman. Could we leave it basically at the call of the chair, because we don't know exactly when this information is going to come forward. Certainly you can make the calls to all the committee members at that time and set the date at that time. We may set one now and the information may not even be here by then.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Fair enough. Who wants to make that motion then?

MR. THURBER: I'll make it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Thurber has moved that I guess we adjourn sine die. All in favour, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: All opposed, please say no.

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. The ayes have it. The motion is carried. Unless there's any other business or any new business, I'd entertain a motion to adjourn.

MR. ZWOZDESKY: I would move that we adjourn.

THE CHAIRMAN: All in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: All opposed, please say no. The meeting is adjourned. Thank you very much.

[The committee adjourned at 8:50 a.m.]

