

9:29 a.m.

[Chairman: Mr. Bogle]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Don, welcome. With your permission we'll have this on the record. The process we've followed to date is to listen to the presentation and then have a general question-and-answer session. So if that's agreeable with you, please proceed.

MR. TANNAS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to first of all make some comments on the final report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission and their maps. If we look at Highwood, it's changed only slightly from the present boundaries. They have been changed to meet the municipal district of Foothills, which therefore excluded the town of Nanton but included the village of Blackie within the boundaries. Right now Blackie is in Little Bow and Nanton is in Highwood, so a little bit of a change there.

From the strong comments that were made at the hearing in High River, I would also comment that the opposition was pretty universal to the idea of a 'rurban' Highwood, where great chunks of Calgary would be included in Highwood. They heard what people in Highwood said and have not drawn the boundaries to include large chunks of Calgary, so I think that's good.

A couple of comments that I'd like to make would be, first of all, that schedule 1 and schedule 2 on the main maps are the same for Highwood. The only comment that I would make on the southern boundary is that there is what's called ID 6, improvement district 6. They did make a presentation to the boundaries commission, saying that they would rather be north and that they had for many years fought to be north. They don't amount to a large population, perhaps a hundred in 16 to 20 townships; it's a very sparsely populated area. They mostly trade north with Nanton and High River, and they don't particularly trade south with either the Crownsnest or Pincher Creek. So they wanted to remain in Highwood, and it wouldn't change the balance of numbers of voters that much. That was mentioned to the commission by Mr. Stan Wilson, and it's my understanding in speaking with the chairman of ID 6, Mac Blades, that they had written several letters to the boundary commission and, as I understand, to the committee, indicating their desire. I would let those letters stand for that group.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just for clarification. They're happy with the existing boundary, which cuts through ID 6.

MR. TANNAS: Yes, that's right. The majority of the population is north. Almost all the population is north.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay; go ahead.

MR. TANNAS: Highwood, as you are aware, is approximately the same electoral setting as it was in 1905, when it was called High River. So I think that's a natural and historic area. The way it is presented in schedules 1 and 2, it's now coterminous with the Foothills municipality and with part of ID 5.

I would leave it at that for comments and would respond to questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thanks very much, Don.  
Stock?

MR. DAY: I'm just looking here for another minute, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

Mike, anything?

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah. You mentioned ID 6. Where is their headquarters?

MR. TANNAS: St. Albert.

MR. CARDINAL: I meant in the improvement district. They must have an office. Is it in your riding or in Pincher Creek?

MR. TANNAS: They're just in the process of getting an office built at what we locally know as the Chain Lakes campground. It's approximately straight west of Claresholm.

MR. CARDINAL: In your constituency?

MR. TANNAS: It's presently in my constituency, but by May's '92 map, that part was cut out.

MR. CARDINAL: Half of ID 6 is in your riding and half is in Pincher Creek.

MR. TANNAS: That's right.

MR. CARDINAL: You say that there's no problem with that. They'd prefer to have it that way?

MR. TANNAS: I guess what I'm trying to say is that first of all there was a presentation made by Stan Wilson on behalf of a number of ranchers in that area. But I did attend a meeting with the ID 6 board, and the board members there said to me that they had written to the boundaries commission and were writing to the committee to say that they wanted to be either with Highwood or with Nanton. They presumably preferred Highwood because you have that whole strip all the way along there, whereas if you're in with Little Bow, then you've got a great long line way out to the east, and the north-south long line is at least similar.

MR. CARDINAL: Nanton, I see, is in your riding now.

MR. TANNAS: Yes, it is.

MR. CARDINAL: Just a small portion – well, it looks small on the map here – of MD 26, including Nanton, jogs just a little into your riding. Is that working well that way, or can that be changed? I was looking at your population figures here. This is the 1991 census. Highwood, I believe, is running at only minus 4.71 percent with a population of 29,224, which could drop considerably. I just wondered if we go towards the 25 percent variance . . .

MR. TANNAS: Particularly MD 31. The towns in there are all growing. Indeed, the two villages there are growing.

MR. CARDINAL: Nanton and . . .

MR. TANNAS: No; in MD 31, the municipal district of Foothills. Okotoks, High River, Black Diamond, and Turner Valley are growth areas, with particularly rapid growth in the town of Okotoks. Also, in the northern part of the municipal district there are a lot of country residential areas, a lot of acreages, and great growth has occurred there in the last four years. Again, that sort of thing shows up in the school population and that kind of thing. Great increases there.

MR. CARDINAL: What's the present population of Nanton, approximately?

MR. TANNAS: I would say roughly about 2,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anything else, Mike?

MR. CARDINAL: That's about it, I guess.

MR. DAY: That was part of my question: what's happening. You've answered in terms of the towns. So along your northern border there, Don, you talked about the growth in the acreages. That will only continue, I would imagine. Is that right?

MR. TANNAS: Yes. Presently there are even plans for hamlets to be established there, and there are projects for areas of 20 and 30 houses to be located and that kind of thing, which is part of the growth.

MR. DAY: Have projections been done on how rapidly that's going to continue? I imagine that's all people just commuting right into Calgary, obviously. Right?

MR. TANNAS: That's true, and Calgary just recently made a big jump in its border. So Highwood as it exists now does have a fairly substantial chunk of Calgary, not in terms of population but in terms of area. Just the other day I was out in this big field of grain, and you wouldn't realize it's in the city of Calgary. It's a hill that goes towards Calgary, and you can't see the Calgary skyline, yet it's part of Calgary. The boundary goes way out along 22X. I would think there must be 10, 12 square miles in there that are essentially farm and a little bit of acreage.

MR. DAY: Which one day are going to be residential in some form.

MR. TANNAS: Yes, indeed.

MR. DAY: The existing boundary, then, what you just described in terms of what Calgary has taken in, how far south does that go?

MR. TANNAS: Right along to Highway 22X, and then it takes a little jog south along Highway 2. Then it goes across and follows the Bow River.

**9:39**

MR. DAY: Oh, I see. Okay.

Would a town like Nanton be holding its own population? Would some of that be moving south, do you think? What would be happening there? Is it hard to say?

MR. TANNAS: Nanton is basically holding its own in terms of population. It's experiencing tough times businesswise. It's on the border of that drier area, and agriculture, particularly grains, has not been too kind to those people who are in that industry. To the west, with cattle, it's of course been much better.

MR. DAY: This may be a tough question, but do you think people in Nanton would generally have more of a community interest with those in Stavely or in High River, or would it be a saw-off?

MR. TANNAS: I would say that it would be a saw-off. Nanton has been for a long time associated with High River. It's interesting to note that it was the one town of the five that are presently in Highwood that did not have representation to the boundaries

commission hearing that was held in High River, so they did not make an official position to them. There was some concern by members of the Nanton council that if they went in with Highwood and Highwood took in a big chunk of Calgary, they would be very much an afterthought for everybody. So they would rather be a bigger player in a more sparsely populated constituency like Little Bow or like Macleod. However, the town council was of a mixed opinion on that, and they then did not make a presentation. Whereas High River, Turner Valley, Black Diamond, Okotoks, and the municipal district of Foothills all made presentations, Nanton did not.

MR. DAY: Would High River be getting any of the kind of growth Okotoks is, or is it too far south yet to catch that commuting drift there?

MR. TANNAS: High River's municipal plan calls for a much slower rate of growth than Okotoks is prepared to entertain.

MR. DAY: Is Bragg Creek in your area?

MR. TANNAS: At the very corner. Where you can see the road going north, Highway 22, that corner is two miles south of the hamlet of Bragg Creek. If you draw a circle around Bragg Creek, then the southern part of that circle would include part of my constituency, but Bragg Creek itself and Redwood Meadows are in fact in Banff-Cochrane. The Sarcee reserve is all within Banff-Cochrane and has traditionally not been part of Highwood.

MR. DAY: Great.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just back to ID 6. I note that secondary 520 running west from Claresholm joins up with Highway 22.

MR. TANNAS: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Where it joins up, would the people at that intersection be trading into Claresholm, whereas north of that they're following 22 up and then going in on 533 to Nanton?

MR. TANNAS: I'm trying to locate that particular road. The map that I have doesn't show it. The question is then: would they be trading into Claresholm?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. TANNAS: Some of them are. If you get up a little farther, they take 533 into Nanton or 22 straight north and go into High River.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Where do all those children go to school?

MR. TANNAS: The children go to school basically in Nanton.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Even straight west of Claresholm?

MR. TANNAS: I'm sorry; I can't answer that. I truly don't know, but I know that the people up in here all go to Nanton.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further north.

MR. TANNAS: Yes, right.

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MR. CHAIRMAN: The other question I had was with ID 5. Currently ID 5 is divided between Banff-Cochrane and Highwood, right? Are you comfortable with the division line in ID 5?

MR. TANNAS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No concerns expressed by constituents?

MR. TANNAS: Not to me and not to the commission.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. That's it. Thank you.  
Other questions by anyone?

MR. CARDINAL: That's good.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thanks very much, Don.

MR. TANNAS: Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 9:44 a.m.]

