

Title: Wednesday, November 7, 2007 Environment Committee

Date: 07/11/07

Time: 6:33 p.m.

[Mr. Ducharme in the chair]

The Chair: Welcome, everyone. I'd like to call the meeting to order and ask that we introduce ourselves for the record, starting on my right.

Dr. Swann: Thank you. David Swann, Calgary-Mountain View.

Mr. Lund: Ty Lund, Rocky Mountain House.

Mr. R. Miller: Rick Miller, Edmonton-Rutherford.

Dr. Massolin: Philip Massolin, committee research co-ordinator, Legislative Assembly Office.

Mr. Reynolds: Rob Reynolds, Senior Parliamentary Counsel, Legislative Assembly.

Mrs. Kamuchik: Louise Kamuchik, Clerk Assistant and director of House services.

Mr. Mitzel: Len Mitzel, MLA, Cypress-Medicine Hat.

Ms Calahasen: Pearl Calahasen, Lesser Slave Lake.

Mr. Hinman: Paul Hinman, Cardston-Taber-Warner.

Mr. Eggen: Dave Eggen, Edmonton-Calder.

Mr. Oberle: Frank Oberle, Peace River.

Mrs. Dacyshyn: Corinne Dacyshyn, committee clerk.

The Chair: I'm Denis Ducharme, MLA for Bonnyville-Cold Lake.

We have a copy of the agenda that was sent out in your package, so if someone could move that the agenda for the November 7, 2007, meeting of the Standing Committee on Resources and Environment be adopted as circulated.

Mr. Oberle: So moved, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Moved by Mr. Oberle. In favour of the motion? Carried.

We also have in our package the October 29, 2007, meeting minutes. I was wondering if someone could move those minutes. Ms Calahasen. In favour of the motion? Carried. Thank you.

Now, as we discussed at the October 29 meeting, in order to ensure the confidentiality of our report prior to tabling it in the Assembly, I would look for a motion to move in camera, and I'd also ask that the Legislative Assembly staff remain in the room. *Hansard*, I think we'll be able to speak loud enough here that you can probably go on and have a bite to eat.

Mr. Oberle: So moved that we go in camera.

The Chair: Okay. Mr. Oberle moves that the Standing Committee on Resources and Environment meet in camera and that the committee support staff remain in attendance. In favour of the motion? Carried. Thank you.

[The committee met in camera from 6:35 p.m. to 7:26 p.m.]

The Chair:

Moved by Mr. Eggen that the Standing Committee on Resources and Environment approve the committee's report on the Beverage Container Recycling Review with the recommendation that the chair be authorized to work with committee staff to incorporate the final changes made at the November 7, 2007 meeting.

In favour of the motion? Carried. Thank you.

I'd now pass it over to Rhonda, if she could discuss with us a few matters regarding the printing of the report and a press release.

Ms Sorensen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In terms of the report I really have no comments in terms of the printing of it other than once it is tabled, the intent is to issue a news release, which I have handed out. With other committees what we've done is just got approval from the chair and deputy chair, and if other comments are forwarded by other members, that's fine, too. This is just a draft. I wasn't here for a good part of the conversation that took place this evening, so there might be things that need to change in this draft in order to reflect those discussions.

Mr. Oberle: I have one that relates to our last discussion. I would delete the first bullet in that section, the one that says: inclusion of milk containers in the deposit refund system.

The Chair: If I could just interrupt you. If the information that has to be forwarded could be forwarded to me at my office and not be discussed at this public forum.

Mr. Oberle: Oh, I'm sorry. Okay.

Dr. Swann: Only an editing suggestion. We've identified that we . . .

The Chair: If you could forward that to me as the chair following the meeting.

Dr. Swann: Even though it's just an edit to the press release?

The Chair: Well, I'm just concerned that your edit may be reading out one of the recommendations that we want to table in the House.

Dr. Swann: Well, it's already written here. It's just a question.

The Chair: This is not a public document yet. This is a draft. We will deal with this, but if you can be in contact with me directly in my office on this issue. Okay. Thank you.

Are there any other items of business to discuss today?

Mr. Reynolds: With respect to when the report is tabled in the House, I just want to advise members that under Standing Order 52.09 it says:

(1) the Government shall respond to a Policy Field Committee's report on any matter other than a report on a Bill within 150 days from the date on which the Policy Field Committee reports.

(2) No motion concurring in the report of a Policy Field Committee to which the Government must respond under suborder (1) shall be voted upon until that response is tabled in the Assembly.

The point being that when the report is presented in the Assembly, there won't be a vote on the report because that would have to await the government's response.

The Chair: Correct.

Mr. Miller.

Mr. R. Miller: Thank you. I asked Rob earlier, and I'm not sure if he's had some time to formulate a response to it yet. It's unclear to me when I read that Standing Order, then, whether or not there would actually be a vote on either the report or the government's response when that comes back into the Assembly. Presumably within 150 days we'll get some sort of response from the minister. What happens at that point? The Standing Orders are unclear, although they infer that there might be a vote then. Would it be a debatable motion? I'm not sure that the Standing Orders necessarily deal with that.

Mr. Reynolds: Well, they do but in another place.

Yes, the vote on a committee report would be a debatable motion. If it was a motion for concurrence in the report, yes, that would certainly be debatable. Practically speaking, there are 150 days that the government has to respond to a report. Someone can correct me on my math, but just picking a day – and I'm not suggesting this is when the committee will report, but let's say November 13. That would mean that the government's response would have to be by April 13. The regulation only exists till April 30, so the regulation would probably be amended sometime in April. There may be a good indication of what the government's response is at that time. I mean, it's conceivable that the concurrence in the report may be moved, but I would leave that to the Assembly to decide. But if there was a motion, it would be debatable.

The Chair: I have one item I'd like to raise, and that's that the minutes from today's meeting are of course not completed. In the interest of ensuring timely accessibility to the committee's records, I would look for someone to make the following motion:

The chair be authorized to review, amend, and approve the minutes of the November 7, 2007, meeting on behalf of the Standing Committee on Resources and Environment.

Mr. Lund: In favour of the motion? Carried. Thank you.

In closing, I'd like to thank all the interested stakeholders, including members of the public, business owners, and other organizations who took the time to participate actively in this review process. I'd also like to thank Alberta Environment officials for the assistance they provided during the review.

The committee also received significant support from the staff of the Legislative Assembly Office, including Parliamentary Counsel, Mr. Robert Reynolds; committee research co-ordinator, Dr. Philip Massolin, and the research team; communications manager, Rhonda Sorensen; *Hansard* staff; security staff; committee clerks, Karen Sawchuk and Jody Rempel; and of course I'd like to thank each and every one of you committee members for your co-operation and initiative in completing the work of this committee in such a timely fashion. Of course, I must add that Corinne has come in as a stand-in. Thank you very much, Corinne, for coming and helping us today.

I just want to say that we had a challenge. We met a lot over the summer months. So I thank each and every one of you for your commitment. Personally, for myself, it was a great experience. I hope that you all agree with that. We made history. We were the

first committee to go on a road trip as a field committee, so it's something to add to your resumé for future job applications, I guess.

With that, I thank each and every one of you, and I'd ask for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. R. Miller: Just before we move to adjourn, I'm curious: what comes next?

The Chair: I'm sure that there are probably going to be other issues. I would think that we'd be able to schedule a meeting in the near future, once we're out of session. I don't think we had intended to meet while we were back in session. Probably right after session we can call a meeting and have some discussions as to what our next challenges may be.

Mr. R. Miller: So should we be scheduling that meeting now?

The Chair: Can I get back to you through the assistance of our clerks to schedule? I didn't bring my calendar in terms of scheduling a date, and I don't know if everyone else did, but we can certainly schedule something for once we're out of session.

Mr. R. Miller: Sure.

Dr. Swann: What was the reason when you asked about new business? I wanted to raise the question of whether it was appropriate now to talk about some issues that we might be interested in raising, or shall we leave it to the next meeting to come prepared to talk about what we'd like to put on the agenda?

The Chair: I'd prefer to be able to move it onto the next meeting if we could.

Mr. Oberle: Mr. Chair, you almost have to because we are in session now, and anything that's forwarded to us from the session, recommended by the Legislature, takes precedence in our business – right? – according to the Standing Orders. So we can't set our business plan until . . .

Mr. R. Miller: We can, but it doesn't take precedence.

Dr. Swann: But they may or may not come forward with something else.

Mr. R. Miller: Right. We don't know that.

The Chair: Agreed. So if we can hold back to see what happens throughout the session and then schedule a meeting for shortly after the session, sometime in early December.

If I could ask someone for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Miller. In favour of the motion? Carried. Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 7:35 p.m.]