



**Legislative Assembly
Province of Alberta**

No. 5

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Third Session

Twenty-Sixth Legislature

Wednesday, March 14, 2007

The Speaker took the Chair at 1:00 p.m.

Members' Statements

Mr. Prins, Hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka, made a statement recognizing Canadian Agricultural Safety Week, March 14-20, 2007.

Mr. Cao, Hon. Member for Calgary-Fort, made a statement regarding the report entitled "Portrait of the Canadian Population in 2006" released by Statistics Canada, in particular, the section entitled "Alberta: the engine of population growth."

Mr. Agnihotri, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie, made a statement regarding Canada Safeway's charitable endeavours highlighting the Millwoods Town Centre Safeway's fund raising efforts for the Edmonton Meals on Wheels program.

Mr. McFarland, Hon. Member for Little Bow, made a statement regarding the Vauxhall Academy of Baseball.

Mr. Hinman, Hon. Member for Cardston-Taber-Warner, made a statement regarding the Warner Hockey School.

Dr. Taft, Hon. Leader of the Official Opposition, made a statement congratulating the University of Alberta Pandas women's volleyball team on winning their seventh Canadian Interuniversity Sport Championship on March 3, 2007.

Presenting Petitions

Dr. Swann, Hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View, presented a petition from 24 Albertans urging the Government to consider providing the additional funds necessary for the Calgary Health Region to proceed immediately and as originally planned with the construction of a hospital in south Calgary.

The petition put forth by Mr. Backs, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning, was not in order to be presented.

The petition put forth by Mr. Coutts, Hon. Member for Livingstone-Macleod, on behalf of Mr. Danyluk, Hon. Member for Lac-La-Biche-St. Paul (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing), was not in order to be presented.

Mr. Elsalhy, Hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung, presented a petition from 64 Edmonton residents urging the Government to complete, as soon as possible, the overpasses and interchanges at the locations where the Anthony Henday Drive (Edmonton ring road) intersects Lessard Road, Callingwood Road (62nd Avenue), and Cameron Heights Drive.

Notices of Motions

Hon. Mr. Renner, Deputy Government House Leader, gave oral notice of the disposition of Written Questions and Motions for Returns, pursuant to Standing Order 34(3):

Written Questions: Stand and retain their places.

Motions for Returns: Stand and retain their places.

Introduction of Bills (First Reading)

Notice having been given:

Bill 16 Police Amendment Act, 2007 — Hon. Mr. Lindsay

Bill 17 Limitation Statutes Amendment Act, 2007 — Dr. Brown

Bill 18 Judicature Amendment Act, 2007 — Hon. Mr. Stevens

Bill 19 Appeal Procedures Statutes Amendment Act, 2007 — Dr. Brown

Upon recommendation of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, and notice having been given:

Bill 20 Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2007 (\$) — Hon. Mr. Snelgrove

On motion by Hon. Mr. Hancock, Government House Leader, the following Bills were placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders:

Bill 17 Limitation Statutes Amendment Act, 2007 — Dr. Brown

Bill 19 Appeal Procedures Statutes Amendment Act, 2007 — Dr. Brown

Speaker's Statement - Oral Question Period

Honourable Members, we'll come back to introductions. But before we commence Oral Question Period today, in what is the second day of the operation of the "rules," the Chair would like to make a comment.

As the Chair indicated yesterday, there was nothing in the Standing Order revisions adopted last Monday night concerning the operation of Oral Question Period. Section 3(a)(ii) of the House Leaders' Agreement states that questions and answers shall be 45 seconds, which is the general rule that the Chair has been applying since the start of the 26th Legislature in March 2005. There was no mention in the House Leaders' Agreement about preambles to questions or deviating from the accepted practice of limiting preambles to supplementary questions.

However, the Chair has had an opportunity now to meet with all three House Leaders this morning. This is the first time that we have met during the process leading to the House Leaders' Agreement. This was a very positive step in communicating the intention and expectations of the House Leaders about the March 7 agreement.

After that meeting the Chair will be vigorously enforcing the 45-second rule from the time the Member is recognized until the end of the 45 seconds. This will apply to questions and this will apply to answers. It may involve stopwatches. This is how it will work in practice. When the Chair rises and says "the Leader of the Official Opposition," the 45 seconds will begin. The Chair will administer the House as normal, and with five seconds remaining the Chair will be notified so that at the end of 45 seconds the question or answer will be over.

During the 45-second period, and this will apply to questions rather than answers, preambles will be allowed whether main or supplementary questions. It seems to be the overwhelming desire of the Members. So you've got 45 seconds for the question. In the past it was a pretty vigorous interpretation: no preambles in the second or third question. Now permitted.

The Chair also wants to make it very clear that when that clock starts counting, if the Hon. Members stand up and cheer the Hon. Member for 30 seconds, the clock has been running. That means only 15 seconds left for the remainder of the question. Now, I know my hon. colleagues — I've been here for a number of years — so I know what the potential is of this happening.

The Chair wants to make one thing very clear. He has no difficulty whatsoever enforcing this provision. The Chair would point out that Standing Order 13(1), which has not changed, requires the Speaker to "preserve order and decorum." In the Chair's experience what often causes Question Period to become unruly are inflammatory preambles that have little to do with the question that is to be asked. So while the Chair will allow the greatest latitude to Members in their questions and answers, the Chair will not let Question Period deteriorate into a situation that would serve to bring this institution into disrepute and in the process reflect poorly on all Members, especially other Members who are not involved in the shenanigans.

If there are concerns about the operation of Question Period, the Chair would encourage members to bring those concerns to his or her House Leader. This interpretation was arrived at about 11:30 this morning so some Members may not be aware of it, but the deal was that the House Leaders are to bring this updated version of the rule to all of their Members.

Remember, as well, we have another opportunity for Members to convey their thoughts, and that is to the Chair of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing, the Hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Creek, as this committee is to have a role in reviewing the operation of the rule changes.

Please do not send notes to the Chair. This happened yesterday. The Chair wants to be very clear that he's committed to ensuring that the operation of the Assembly represents the expectation of Members. It is your Assembly, and the Chair has been elected to enforce your rules.

In addition to that, and to the two independent Members in the House, I'd invite them to come and visit me this afternoon, 4:30 this afternoon, because in addition to this clarification the Chair also provided to the three House Leaders a list of questions and comments with respect to the proposed changes to the rules of the Assembly and also provided to the three House Leaders, as best as one can determine, an anticipated budget to implement all of these changes and these rules.

The three House Leaders will provide that information to their caucus members. I will provide that to the two Members of the Assembly who were not present at the meeting this morning and, if required, we'll table those documents in the House at a subsequent date, but I do not anticipate that this will be required.

Tabling Returns and Reports

Mr. Martin, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview, on behalf of Mr. Mason, Hon. Leader of the New Democrat Opposition:

Alberta Corporate Registration System Corporation/Non-Profit Search dated March 13, 2007, concerning Holy Cross Manor Incorporated

Sessional Paper 64/2007

Alberta Progressive Conservative Association web page document entitled "Candidates for the 2007 PCAA (Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta) Executive Committee Elections"

Sessional Paper 65/2007

Dr. Taft, Hon. Leader of the Official Opposition:

Drumheller Mail article dated December 27, 2006, entitled "Top 10 stories of 2006" prepared by Patrick Kolafa

Sessional Paper 66/2007

Mr. MacDonald, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar:

Letter dated October 19, 2006, from Mr. MacDonald, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, to Ed Stelmach, Alberta Progressive Conservative leadership candidate, inquiring how Mr. Stelmach would deal with the economic difficulties surrounding electrical deregulation if he was elected leader

Sessional Paper 67/2007

Excerpt from the report entitled "General Revenue Fund, Details of Grants, Supplies and Services, Capital Assets and Other, by Payee for the Year Ended March 31, 2005" concerning grants provided to C.G. Paulgaard Farms Limited

Sessional Paper 68/2007

Dr. Miller, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora:

Copies of an employment contract, work permit, pay stubs, health care invoices, and related documentation concerning Armando Garcia

Sessional Paper 69/2007

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Committee of Supply (Day 1 — Interim Supply Estimates)

According to Order, the Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply and the Speaker left the Chair.

(Assembly in Committee)

And after some time spent therein, the Deputy Speaker assumed the Chair and Rev. Abbott reported as follows:

Mr. Speaker:

The Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions of the 2007-08 Interim Supply Estimates, Offices of the Legislative Assembly, Government, reports progress thereon, and requests leave to sit again.

The question being put, the report and the request for leave to sit again were agreed to.

Consideration of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech

(Day 3)

Moved by Mr. Ducharme and seconded by Mr. Johnston:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To His Honour the Honourable Norman L. Kwong, CM, AOE, the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Alberta:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

A debate followed.

Hon. Mr. Snelgrove moved adjournment of the debate, which was agreed to.

Adjournment

On motion by Hon. Mr. Hancock, Government House Leader, the Assembly adjourned at 5:42 p.m. until Thursday, March 15, 2007, at 1:00 p.m.

Hon. Ken Kowalski,
Speaker

Title: Wednesday, March 14, 2007