

Daily sitting 43

Thursday, March 20, 2014

1 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

Hon. Mr. Higgs rose on a point of privilege in relation to comments made by Mr. Fraser, during Oral Questions the previous sitting day, concerning certain Ministerial expenses not being posted on-line on a timely basis. The Minister alleged the comments were deliberately misleading, as the expenses in question were recently posted on-line. In response to the point, Mr. Fraser rose and apologized to the House and acknowledged the error in his comments.

With leave of the House, Hon. Mr. P. Robichaud moved, seconded by the Honourable the Premier: (Motion 43)

THAT, in addition to the existing sitting hours prescribed in Standing Rule 29(1) and by Special Order of the House adopted November 6, 2013, the House shall sit on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.;

THAT this Special Order shall come into effect on Tuesday, March 25, 2014, and shall remain in effect until the adjournment of the House on Thursday, March 27, 2014.

And the question being put, it was resolved in the affirmative.

Pursuant to Notice of Motion 15, Mr. Bernard LeBlanc, on behalf of Mr. Collins, moved, seconded by Mr. Melanson:

WHEREAS the causeway gates on the Petitcodiac River were opened on April 14, 2010 as part of a 3 phase restoration project started under the former Liberal government;

WHEREAS the health of the Petitcodiac River has improved substantially, and life forms have returned to the river since the opening of the causeway gates;

WHEREAS a newly invigorated Petitcodiac River has attracted a number of tourists, including avid surfers, to the Moncton area since the opening of the causeway gates;

WHEREAS the third and final phase of the Petitcodiac River Restoration Project involves the construction of a bridge, to replace the causeway structure, that was due to open in 2013;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick urge the provincial government to move forward with its application for federal funding for the third and final phase of the Petitcodiac River Restoration Project to allow for the project's completion.

And the question being put, a debate ensued.

And after some time, Hon. Mr. Williams, seconded by Hon. Mr. P. Robichaud, moved in amendment:

AMENDMENT

That Motion 15 be amended:

By adding the following after the fourth WHEREAS clause:

WHEREAS the year before the David Alward Government took office, spending grew by 5.9 per cent and the Province was facing annual deficits in the order of one billion dollars if spending was not curtailed;

WHEREAS the Liberal Opposition fails to recognise the fiscal challenges facing the Province and continues to advocate for irresponsible spending by Government without a plan to fund these initiatives without further increasing the debt and deficit;

WHEREAS the Province of New Brunswick cannot afford this reckless spending without a plan that will ensure the sustainability of the Province's finances and the security of our future;

WHEREAS the David Alward Government has a plan that leads towards economic prosperity and balanced budgets;

WHEREAS the Liberal Opposition does not support the responsible development of our natural resources, including natural gas, that will be transformative to the economy of our Province, improve the standing of our people, permit New Brunswickers to stay with their families and provide the Government with significantly stronger fiscal capacity;

WHEREAS there are numerous priorities for federal and provincial spending in southeastern New Brunswick; and

WHEREAS the residents of southeastern New Brunswick should determine their spending priorities for their region, which may include such items as a Metro Centre;

In the resolution clause, by replacing all the words following “Petitcodiac River Restoration Project” with “once the Province has the appropriate fiscal capacity to allow for the project's completion and once the region has identified this project as their priority for federal and provincial funding”.

Mr. Speaker put the question on the proposed amendment.

Mr. Fraser rose on a point of order and submitted that the proposed amendment was out of order as it introduced foreign elements into the original motion.

At 3.14 o'clock p.m., Mr. Speaker declared a recess and left the chair.

3.25 o'clock p.m.

Mr. Speaker resumed the chair and delivered the following ruling:

STATEMENT BY SPEAKER

Members,

I have reviewed the original motion and the amendment proposed by the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. I agree with the Opposition House Leader that the amendment proposes a number of significant changes, many of which are foreign to the original motion.

The subject matter of the original motion is the final phase of the Petitcodiac River Restoration Project and the construction of a bridge to replace the causeway structure. The motion asks the provincial government to move forward with its application for federal funding for the final phase of the project.

The proposed amendment introduces a number of elements unrelated to the main motion, such as annual provincial deficits; irresponsible spending; economic prosperity; balanced budgets; responsible development of natural resources, including natural gas; and a proposed Metro Center.

As stated in *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, paragraph 578: *An amendment setting forth a proposition dealing with a matter which is foreign to the proposition involved in the main motion is not relevant and cannot be moved.*

The same principle is cited on page 453 of the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* which states: *An amendment is out of order procedurally if it is not relevant to the main motion or exceeds the scope of the motion.*

I find that the proposed amendment does exceed the scope of the main motion and, accordingly, I find the amendment to be out of order.

Debate resumed on Motion 15.

And after some time, Ms. Wilson, seconded by Hon. Mr. P. Robichaud, moved in amendment:

AMENDMENT

That Motion 15 be amended:

By adding the following after the fourth WHEREAS clause:

WHEREAS the Province of New Brunswick cannot afford spending commitments without a plan that will ensure the sustainability of the Province's finances and the security of our future;

WHEREAS there are numerous priorities for federal and provincial spending in southeastern New Brunswick; and

WHEREAS the residents of southeastern New Brunswick should determine their spending priorities for their region, which may include such items as a Metro Centre;

In the resolution clause, by replacing all the words following “Petitcodiac River Restoration Project” with “once the Province has the appropriate fiscal capacity to allow for the project’s completion and once the region has identified this project as their priority for federal and provincial funding”.

Mr. Fraser rose on a point of order and submitted that the proposed amendment was out of order as it introduced foreign elements into the original motion.

At 3.52 o’clock p.m., Mr. Speaker declared a recess and left the chair.

4.09 o’clock p.m.

Mr. Speaker resumed the chair and delivered the following ruling:

STATEMENT BY SPEAKER

Members,

I have reviewed the original motion and the amendment proposed by the Member for Petitcodiac, and I find this amendment to be in order, for the following reasons.

The subject matter of the proposed amendment is not foreign to the original motion. Both address spending and the priorities of government. As stated in *Beauchesne’s Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, paragraph 567: *The object of an amendment may be either to modify a question in such a way as to increase its acceptability or to present to the House a different proposition as an alternative to the original question.*

I also find that the amendment does not negative the intent of the original motion. Rather, it presents an alternative proposal for the consideration of the House. Accordingly, I find the amendment to be in order.

Mr. Speaker put the question on the proposed amendment and a debate ensued.

And the debate being ended, and the question being put, the amendment was adopted.

Mr. Speaker put the question on Motion 15 as amended as follows:

WHEREAS the causeway gates on the Petitcodiac River were opened on April 14, 2010 as part of a 3 phase restoration project started under the former Liberal government;

WHEREAS the health of the Petitcodiac River has improved substantially, and life forms have returned to the river since the opening of the causeway gates;

WHEREAS a newly invigorated Petitcodiac River has attracted a number of tourists, including avid surfers, to the Moncton area since the opening of the causeway gates;

WHEREAS the third and final phase of the Petitcodiac River Restoration Project involves the construction of a bridge, to replace the causeway structure, that was due to open in 2013;

WHEREAS the Province of New Brunswick cannot afford spending commitments without a plan that will ensure the sustainability of the Province's finances and the security of our future;

WHEREAS there are numerous priorities for federal and provincial spending in southeastern New Brunswick; and

WHEREAS the residents of southeastern New Brunswick should determine their spending priorities for their region, which may include such items as a Metro Centre;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick urge the provincial government to move forward with its application for federal funding for the third and final phase of the Petitcodiac River Restoration Project once the Province has the appropriate fiscal capacity to allow for the project's completion and once the region has identified this project as their priority for federal and provincial funding.

And the question being put, Motion 15 as amended was resolved in the affirmative.

Debate resumed on the adjourned debate on the motion that Bill 16, *An Act to Amend the Political Process Financing Act*, be now read a second time.

And the debate being ended, and the question being put that Bill 16 be now read a second time, it was resolved in the affirmative.

Accordingly, Bill 16, *An Act to Amend the Political Process Financing Act*, was read a second time and ordered referred to the Committee of the Whole House.

The Order being read for second reading of Bill 46, *Government Advertising Accountability Act*, a debate arose thereon.

And after some time, due to the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, Mr. Urquhart, the Deputy Speaker, took the chair as Acting Speaker.

And after some further time, Mr. Deputy Speaker interrupted proceedings and announced that the hour of daily adjournment had arrived.

And then, 6 o'clock p.m., the House adjourned.