

Request for review and subsequent overturn of Bonnyville Cold Lake Nomination

The decision that there be only one poll for this nomination located in Cold Lake where one Candidate was the local Mayor, created the basic objection in this nomination. The following documentation identifies numerous irregularities. I request that it be determined through an impartial investigation of neutral PCAA authorities; if any members in the local Bonnyville-Cold Lake PC Association, the Nomination Committee and outgoing MLA Genia Leskiw, were in a conflict of interest during this nomination and thus invalidate the nomination.

I also respectfully request this inquiry in order to restore the good name of the PCAA in the Bonnyville Cold Lake constituency, as immeasurable damage has been done to the reputation, by a select few, who have not acted in the best interests of the PCAA and it's members. During this nomination, repeated requests by many loyal and long standing members of the PC Alberta party for fairness were rejected. The importance of your review into unethical and irregular behavior cannot be overstated; this PC riding is in grave jeopardy of being lost in the next provincial election. Once the public trust is destroyed it is very hard to regain.

The senior executives of the PCAA should understand that according to the local PC Nomination Committee; the PCAA Calgary and Edmonton Executive are responsible for ensuring one Candidate was given preferential treatment. The optics of this has a damaging affect on the overall image of the PC Alberta Party. If this is not the case, as I expect is not, then it is important the PC Alberta Party take appropriate action to restore its reputation.

The emails, letters and correspondence to substantiate the following information, may have to be sent as hard copies under separate cover, because there are so many items; they may not all transmit as an attachment to this initial document.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PCAA Code of Conduct and Ethics Guidelines

“Acting in an ethically, morally, legally and professional manner is expected of members of the Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta (PCAA) Board of Directors, PC Alberta Fund, respective PCAA committee members, PCAA Constituency Presidents, MLA's, MLA nominees/candidates, and PCAA staff members, while representing the PCAA in any manner.

All members are to make appropriate use of authority while exercising responsibilities and behave with suitable decorum. Members of the PCAA Board of Directors, PC Alberta Fund, respective committee members, PCAA Constituency Presidents, MLA's, and MLA nominees/candidates are responsible for

acting in the best collective interests of the PCAA, which, in all cases, shall be consistent with the PCAA Principles, Constitution and Policies.

Accountability to the PCAA by members of the Board of Directors, PC Alberta Fund, respective committee members, PCAA Constituency Presidents, MLA's, and MLA nominees/candidates supersedes any actual or apparent conflicting loyalties with other political parties, federal and municipal governments, businesses and membership on other boards and councils."

The Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta Code of Conduct and Ethics, Conflict Of Interest

" Any Members of the PCAA Board of Directors, PC Alberta Fund, respective committees, PCAA Constituency Presidents, MLA's, and MLA nominees/candidates in a real or perceived conflict of interest position shall disclose such conflict in writing to the Board of Directors and shall remove him or herself from deliberation of any applicable matter."

1. The President of the Local Bonnyville-Cold Lake PC Association, Bob Buckle is an employee the City of Cold Lake, and works for Candidate- Cold Lake Mayor Copeland in the role of Deputy Mayor of Cold Lake. Bob Buckle was involved in the campaign, the nomination process, and he worked at the voting polls, there-by placing the Deputy Mayor and President of the Constituency Association in a "perceived or real" conflict of interest by virtue of his title and employer.

In accordance with the PC Alberta 2015 Nominations Elections Manual,

"Article 2.11 No person who has been appointed RO (Returning Officer) and /or DRO (Deputy Returning Officer) shall endorse any one candidate or engage in any candidates campaign or campaign activity."

2. The Returning Officer who is resident in Cold Lake has a long-standing relationship with the Cold Lake Mayor and Candidate. The Returning Officer signed out membership books for sale, prior to the opening of the nomination on February 6th, and prior to leaving on vacation. Refer to image attached used DURING the nomination on the Official PC Alberta Bonnyville Cold Lake Constituency Facebook page which includes; Candidate Copeland, outgoing MLA Genia Leskiw, the returning Officer Ajaz Quraish.
3. In addition outgoing MLA Genia Leskiw signed out membership books and campaigned actively for the Cold Lake Candidate. This was in the form of accompanying this candidate to several events, making introductions and endorsements in the press. The sitting MLA disregarded pleas of elected officials in her constituency including: (Bonnyville Mayor, the MD Reeve and Councilors) who requested additional polling stations. Refer to Reference # 2 attached under separate cover.

There are many individuals who attended functions where Genia brought Copeland or invited people to attend events for Copeland. For sample verification contact Vivian Bryant 780-826-7785

4. When nomination Candidate Dixie Dahlstedt asked outgoing MLA Genia Leskiw if she would have any objections to the nomination candidate Dahlstedt putting her name forward, the outgoing MLA Genia Leskiw, told nomination candidate Dahlstedt, “I don’t care what you do, I’m supporting Craig Copeland because he got me elected....”

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR PC PARTY MEMBERSHIP PARTICIPATION

In accordance with PC Alberta 2015 Nomination Elections Manual,

“Article A.3.1.1 Provide for reasonable Public Notice to members and the public of the nomination process in accordance with the Constitution, including the boundaries of the Constituency, which shall at a minimum include the following:

“Article A.3.1.1.2 The public notice shall be published no less than seven (7) days and no more than twenty-one (21) days prior to the close of nominations. “

5. According to the Local PC Nomination Committee Chair Carol Reynolds -Wittman, the committee intended to announce the nomination in 4 local publications to give reasonable notice to the public. The Ad only appeared as a small Ad on page 12 of the Cold Lake publication. The nomination committee blamed the oversight on a coordination error with the local publication the “Bonnyville Nouvelle”, but would not adjust the nomination period in accordance with the 2015 Nominations Elections Manual. The Ad was placed in the next week’s edition of the “Bonnyville Nouvelle” on February 10th, which meant it appeared only 3 days prior to the close of the nomination on February 13th.
6. The original PC nomination committee for Bonnyville Cold Lake consisted of four people only. Two of the four members of this nomination committee went on vacation during the nomination process and returned just a few days prior to the election. One member was removed from the committee during the early stages of the nomination. This skeletal committee of ONE person, refused to accept assistance that was offered from members of the local PC membership who could act as replacements, to ensure the integrity of the nomination.
 - a. Chair and Deputy RO - Carol Reynolds Wittman
 - b. Returning Officer – Ajaz Quraishi (went on vacation)
 - c. John Irwin (went on vacation)
 - d. Ron Young (removed from the nomination committee by the Chair)

7. VP of Policy and PC nomination committee member Ron Young expressed his concerns to the nomination committee that there was a legitimate need for additional polls and volunteers. Ron Young volunteered to co-ordinate volunteers and arrange facilities. The nomination committee promptly dismissed Ron Young from the nomination committee. Refer to Reference # 1 attached under separate cover.
8. The nomination committee claimed it did not have the manpower to manage additional polls. However, Ron Young, PC Alberta Party VP of Policy, for the local Constituency Association, volunteered to provide as many volunteers as required. He suggested over 60 volunteers may be required based on previous nominations. These offers were ignored. Ron also had experience managing voting polls in previous elections. In the end a much small group of volunteers attempted to put hundreds of voters through the 2 hour advance poll, causing lengthy wait times for voters outside. Refer to Reference # 2 attached under separate cover.

Refer to the PC Alberta 2015 Nomination Elections Manual, The Role of the Returning Officer

“Article 2.1 Ensuring that volunteers are recruited and trained to carry out the rules and procedures provided in the Constitution. “

9. The Returning Officer Ajaz Quraishi was not available to perform his responsibilities as he was on vacation until less than a week prior to the voting day. The only people approved to work at the polling stations were supporters of Copeland, and PC Alberta members/employees from head offices who interceded to oversee the voting. All other assistance was refused.

DISENFRANCHISING PC PARTY MEMBERS THROUGH INTERFERENCE

10. The existing list of PC members, (prior to the nomination dated Feb 05, 2015) clearly demonstrated a greater number of registered PC members in Bonnyville than in Cold Lake. If only one full poll was to be provided, the larger number of existing PC members substantiated the request that a full poll be provided in Bonnyville before Cold Lake. Furthermore Bonnyville is geographically located centrally in the constituency and Cold Lake is located in the far northeastern corner of the constituency, which disenfranchised many voters. Refer to Reference # 3 attached under separate cover.
11. Prior to leaving on vacation, Nomination Committee person, John Irwin informed to Candidate Dahlstedt that a poll would be located in Bonnyville at the spacious C2 multipurpose center. The Mayor of Bonnyville, also confirmed, prior to the announcement of the nomination, that the C2

center was available as well as other large local sites. These facilities were later claimed by the nomination committee to not be available. Verify with Bonnyville Mayor Gene Sobelowski 780-573-1884.

12. Additional polls, or a roving poll were requested multiple times, by several people including; the Mayor of Bonnyville (PC member), the Reeve of the MD of Bonnyville (PC member), Ward 3 Councilor Mike Krywiak and former PC MLA Ernie Isley, Local PC Nomination Committee member and VP of Policy, Ron Young. It is historically typical to have more than one poll, usually 3 are provided, one in Glendon, 1 in Bonnyville and 1 in Cold Lake. Refer to Reference # 4 attached under separate cover.
13. Ward 3 Councilor Mike Krywiak offered the hall in Glendon, free of charge, for an additional voting poll. Ward Councilor Krywiak argued that constituents in his ward would have to drive over an hour to get to the poll in Cold Lake. Many seniors and voters would be unable to drive and therefore would not be able to vote. Doctors who were on call in Bonnyville could also not travel more than 15 minutes away from the Bonnyville hospital and could not vote. His request was repeatedly denied. Refer to Reference # 5 attached under separate cover.
14. Several adjacent constituencies, also conducting PC nominations, were given more than one poll, (including the adjacent constituency of St.Paul- Lac La Biche -Two Hills) which will have 4 polling stations on Saturday March 15, 2015.
15. After many appeals to the PC local nomination committee, and the main PC Alberta Party an advance poll was approved, for Thursday February 19th, however the advance poll was only open for 2 hours on a weeknight, in contrast to the regular poll, which was open for 5 hours, on a Saturday afternoon. Additional requests were made for a longer polling period than 2 hours. Refer to Reference # 6 attached under separate cover.
16. The advance poll was not ADA accessible, and many elderly voters and families with children were unable to stand outside in the cold to wait upwards of one hour to vote, further disenfranchising many PC members from voting.
17. According to voters, the rear door within the voting room was blocked until (under protest) the exit was made available for voters, as the narrow office corridor they had to go through to get to the voting room, was not wide enough for two-way traffic and ADA access. Jeff Dubois 587-437-5592

18. According to Carol Reynolds Wittman, PC Alberta selected the location for the advance poll. PC Alberta claims the local committee selected the advance poll location in Bonnyville.
19. Several other larger venues were available in Bonnyville on the evening of the advance poll, with large adjacent parking lots, indoor seating for seniors or those with disabilities, public washrooms and ample room for voters. The ACFA office, which was rented, had no parking, no room for voters to wait indoors in a suitable size vestibule or foyer. At the ACFA office, voters were forced to stand outside in line, which reached around the block and left voters outside in the cold freezing rain for upwards of an hour. Once inside, voters were subjected to being funneled through a narrow corridor that was described by many voters as; “being herded like cattle through a cattle chute.” Verify with Mayor Gene Sobolowski 780-573-1884
20. According to voters they lined up outside in a line which wrapped around the building. The weather was cold and sleet fell on the voters as they waited outside to enter the building. At which point a further wait was required until they could enter the voting room. Some voters said they waited for upwards of an hour. One voter had an oxygen tank that ran low, due to the long wait. Verify with Dennis Germain 780-826-0724

Refer to 2015 Nomination Elections Manual, The Role of the Returning Officer

“Article 2.4 Maintain integrity of the ballots and the voter registration process. etc...”

21. There were 2 different ballots used for this nomination. The ballot in Bonnyville at the advance poll required voters to rate candidates in order of preference, by numbering Candidates 1 and 2 OR marking an X. Many voters were confused as to the necessity of the numbering system given there were only 2 candidates. By contrast the ballots in Cold Lake only required voters to mark an X next to their choice of candidate
22. When Candidate Dahlstedt picked up Nomination papers Carol Reynolds Wittman indicated that each Candidate would give a short speech prior to voting commencing on February 21. On the evening of February 20th Candidate Dahlstedt emailed Carol Reynolds Wittman to confirm speaking time and was informed there would be no speeches. Dahlstedt was not advised in advance of this change in protocol. Refer to Reference #7 attached under separate cover.
23. Outgoing MLA Genia Leskiw and her Official Government of Alberta staff, Carmen and Julie provided assistance at the poll in Cold Lake. Genia and her staff helped voters register and it was reported that Genia Leskiw took voters by the arm and escorted them to vote. Voters reported Genia made them feel their privacy was violated. Jim Ludwig of Cold Lake will verify this. Genia

Leskiw lives in Bonnyville but did not show up at the advance poll to wait out in the cold with her constituents.

24. A witness indicated that Copeland was reportedly contacting voters after they left the poll in Cold Lake and telling them to bring people back to the poll because the vote was too close. The scrutineer will verify that the people inside the counting room had no cell phone or electronic devices, however people working at the poll, including MLA Genia Leskiw, Genia Leskiw's personal staff, Cold Lake Deputy Mayor Bob Buckle, and John Irwin were not required to lock up any electronic devices or cell phones. Verify with scrutineer Jim Cheverie.
25. While waiting for the nomination results to be announced in Cold Lake on February 21, 2015. The nomination candidate Dixie Dahlstedt, as well as witness Jeff Dubois, and a reporter were witness to Craig Copeland receiving a call. Copeland responded when answering the call; "there were 500 votes in Bonnyville and 800 here, you didn't have to go through that did you?" Copeland gave the caller information about voting counts, which was privileged information and was not to be provided to either candidate at that time or anytime prior. Verify with witness Jeff Dubois 587-437-5592

TREATMENT OF PC PARTY MEMBERS

26. According to voters, the rear door access led to a back alley where voters were required to make their way down an icy back alley, to return to the front street, which did not comply with ADA standards. Refer to Reference # 8 attached under separate cover.
27. At the advance poll many voters complained of being treated very rudely. Many were very upset, by what was stated as: "the worst experience they had ever had at a voting poll in 60 years." Refer to Reference # 9 attached under separate cover.
28. Several stated they felt like they were voting in a third world country. Refer to Reference # 10 attached under separate cover. Verify with Omer Plaquin 780-635-4190
29. Many voters reported they felt intimidated at the advance poll, and were rudely rushed as they zippered up coats and put their winter hats and clothes on. Verify with Marie Ilchuck 780-826-5436
30. One female voter, (a highly respected former teacher) recounted that when she asked the local PC President and Deputy Mayor; why they had selected the ACFA as the voting site when there were

much better locations such as the C2 center? The PC President and Deputy Mayor of Cold Lake Bob Buckle shouted at her; “You’ve had your chance to vote, now GET OUT!” and he flung his arm and pointed at the rear exit”. Verify with Thelma Watrich 780-635-3845

31. The Reeve Ed Rondeau was not permitted to vote, at the discretion of PC Alberta. In spite of the fact that the Reeve was a long time loyal member of the PC Party and had been a member in good standing for decades. Verify with Ed Rondeau 780-573-9624
32. It was reported that the volunteers at the poll caused one woman to leave the poll weeping. Verify with MLA Ernie Isley 780-812-2990
33. The Local PC Nomination Committee Chair claims the committee was not treated respectfully, however it should be clearly understood by anyone reviewing this matter that; had the Nomination Committee Chair accepted the reasonable recommendations (consistent with past nominations), and further assistance of long standing loyal PC Alberta Local Constituency Members, the frustration which was expressed, would have been completely averted.

USE OF SECURITY, THE POLICE AND THE SUPPRESSION OF THE PRESS

34. Ward 3 Councillor Mike Krywiak went to use the bathroom and was refused access to use the bathroom. He was told to go to a local fast food restaurant. The Chair of the nomination committee Carol Reynolds Wittman then called the RCMP and falsely reported that Councillor Krywiak was intoxicated and disruptive. The three RCMP officers who responded confirmed Councillor Krywiak was not intoxicated or disruptive as reported by Nomination Chair Carol Reynolds Wittman. For verification contact the RCMP detachment in Bonnyville. Contact Warren Feland 780-635-4187 and also Refer to References attached under separate cover.
35. It was reported that the Security Guard, (brought in by Nomination Chair, Carol Reynolds Wittman) told voters they were “trespassing and would have to get out or they would not be allowed to vote” for taking shelter in an office adjacent the corridor. An employee, of the ACFA informed the security that they (the ACFA) were providing this office to the people for shelter from the cold and therefore PC Alberta had no authority to evict them. Verify with the Director of the (Organization of Alberta’s French Speaking Community) ACFA Therese Dallaire 780-812-0657.
36. The press was refused entry to the building, they were told they could not take photographs; A security guard, provided by the Chair Carol Reynolds Wittman, came out of the polling station and

instructed the press to stay a minimum of 50 meters away from the building. Verify with editor Mike Pickford of the Bonnyville Nouvelle 780-826-3876

37. The question as to why security guards were required and why the press was forced to leave created a perception of oppression, which some PC Members described as like living in a communist country.

Epilogue

MLA Genia Leskiw went on vacation and did not formally announce that she would not seek re-election until just prior to her return, which reduced the nomination period to one week for candidates to put their name forward and one week for the campaign. The total nomination period was fourteen days. However, the formal announcement was delayed and appeared in the Bonnyville Nouvelle (local newspaper) only three days prior to the close of the nomination, allowing for only ten days for the formal nomination process.

A total of 1252 votes were cast, and in spite of the irregularities the nomination resulted in a marginal win by candidate Copeland by 72 votes.

Voting Results

PC Nomination for the Constituency of Bonnyville-Cold Lake

Total votes:	1252 votes cast
	591 votes cast for Dixie Dahlstedt
	663 votes cast for Craig Copeland

Respectfully,

Dixie Dahlstedt